

BLAKELY FAMILY



**A history of
Sarah Haughton Blakely
and
her children**

**By Laura Woodrough Steneck
August 2003**

DESCENDANTS OF SARAH HOUGHTON BLAKELY

SARAH OR ALICE¹ (--?--), b. 1781 England, d. 1854 East Liverpool, Columbiana, OH
+(--?--)¹ BLAKELY, b. circa 1785 England, m. circa 1800 England, d. before 1830
+-- JAMES B.² BLAKELY, b. 1804 Lancashire County, England, d. 1882 St. Mary's, Elk, PA
+SUSANANNA² SMYTH, b. 1804 Murrinsville, Butler County, PA, m. 1827 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1885 St. Mary's, Elk, PA
+-- WILLIAM³ BLAKELY, b. 1828 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1828 Pittsburgh, PA
+-- SARAH ANN³ BLAKELY, b. 1829 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1882 NE
+-- LAVINIA HARVEY³ BLAKELY, b. 1831 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1904 St. Mary's, Elk, PA
+SEBASTIAN³ WIMMER, b. 1831 Thalmassing, Bavaria, m. 1857, d. 1921
+-- WILFRIED⁴ WIMMER, b. 1858 St Paul, Minn, d. 1913 St Paul, Minn.
+-- ERNEST JOSEPH⁴ WIMMER, b. 1859 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA, d. 1900 Brookport - Horton Township, Elk, PA
+LOUISE⁴ SCANLAN, m. 1895
+-- SEBASTIAN JOSEPH⁴ WIMMER JR, b. 1862 Latrobe, PA
+DAISY LOUISE⁴ SHAEFER, m. 1892
+-- MARY ELIZABETH ROSE NANITTA⁵ WIMMER, b. 1893 St. Mary's, Elk, PA
+-- JACK⁵ WIMMER, b. 1897 St. Mary's, Elk, PA
+-- MARY LOUISE³ BLAKELY, b. 1832 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1908 Cincinnati, Hamilton, OH
+JOHN BECAN³ RYAN, b. 1826 Ireland, m. 1855 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1871 Cincinnati, Hamilton, OH
+-- MARY LOUISE⁴ RYAN, b. 1856, d. 1934 Chicago, IL
+-- EFFIE VIRGINIA⁴ RYAN, b. 1857, d. 1912 Atlantic City, NJ
+-- JAMES CORNELIUS⁴ RYAN, b. 1859 Cincinnati, Hamilton, OH, d. 1936 Dayton, KY
+MARY ELIZABETH⁴ SHILLING, b. 1880 Cincinnati, Hamilton, OH, m. 1901, d. 1956 Hamilton, OH
+-- MARY VIRGINIA⁵ RYAN, b. 1902, d. 1902
+-- JAMES BLAKELY⁵ RYAN, b. 1904, d. 1904
+-- JOSEPHA AILEEN⁵ RYAN, b. 1906, d. 2000
+-- JOSEPH BLAKELY⁵ RYAN, b. 1909, d. 1990
+ALICE G.⁵ STAPLETON, b. 1914 Rosedale, KY, m. 1939, d. 1969
+-- AILEEN ELIZABETH⁶ RYAN, b. 1940
+-- JAMES RUFFNER⁵ RYAN, b. 1911, d. 1988 Tulsa, OK
+MARY⁵ STANLEY is still living
+-- MARY VIRGINIA⁶ RYAN is still living
+-- JAMES CORNELIUS⁶ RYAN is still living
+-- JOHN CORNELIUS⁵ RYAN, b. 1916, d. 1999 OH
+JEANNE MARY⁵ BUSCHMILLER is still living
+-- JOHN JOSEPH⁶ RYAN is still living
+-- DENNIS⁶ RYAN is still living
+-- KEVIN MICHAEL⁶ RYAN is still living
+-- KATHLEEN MARY⁶ RYAN is still living
+-- ROBERT RUFFNER⁶ RYAN is still living
+-- EVARISTA VIRGINIA⁵ RYAN, b. 1919, d. 1921
+-- ANNA AGNES⁴ RYAN, b. 1861, d. 1866
+-- JOHN BECAN⁴ RYAN, b. 1863, d. 1919 Cincinnati, Hamilton, OH

+-- **SUSAN JOSEPHINE⁴ RYAN**, b. 1865, d. 1866
 +-- **FRANCIS XAVIER⁴ RYAN**, b. 1865, d. 1865
 +-- **JOSEPHA AILEEN⁴ RYAN**, b. 1867, d. 1950 Cincinnati, Hamilton,
 OH
 +-- **BEATRICE GRACE⁴ RYAN**, b. circa 1869, d. 1887 Cincinnati,
 Hamilton, OH
 +-- **SUSANNA M.³ BLAKELY**, b. 1837 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1901 Erie, PA
 +-- **WILLIAM JAMES³ BLAKELY**, b. 1839 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1877 Erie, PA
 +**JOSEPHINE³ LUHR**, b. 1842, m. 1864 St. Mary's, Elk, PA, d. 1865 St.
 Mary's, Elk, PA
 +**MARY³ GENSHEIMER**, b. 1850, m. 1870 Erie, PA, d. circa 1930
 Pittsburgh, PA
 +-- **JOSEPHINE⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1871 Erie, PA, d. 1942
 +-- **EUGENE J.⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1873 Erie, PA
 +**CARRIE⁴ (--?--)**, b. 1876, m. circa 1897
 +-- **EUGENE J.⁵ BLAKELY JR.**, b. 1898 PA, d. after 1994
 +-- **J. KENNETH⁵ BLAKELY** is still living
 +-- **CAROLYN⁵ BLAKELY** is still living
 +-- **SUSAN⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1875 Erie, PA, d. 1955 Seaton Hill, PA
 +-- **JAMES⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1877
 +-- **LAURIE JOHN³ BLAKELY**, b. 1843 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA, d. 1917
 Covington, Kenton, KY
 +**LILY HUDSON³ LENDRUM**, b. 1852 Covington, Kenton, KY, m. 1877
 Covington, Kenton, KY, d. 1922 Chicago, IL
 +-- **STEPHENS LAURIE⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1878 Covington, Kenton, KY, d.
 1959 Fort Mitchell, Kenton, KY
 +**JANE DEVALCOURT STAMPS⁴ PIATT**, b. 1882 Lexington,
 Fayette, KY, m. 1906 Covington, Kenton, KY, d. 1928 Covington, Kenton, KY
 +-- **STEPHENS BUCKNER CUTHBERT⁵ BLAKELY**, b. 1907
 Covington, Kenton, KY, d. 1938 Covington, Kenton, KY
 +**MARJORIE⁵ CARSON**, b. circa 1907 Comer, GA, m. 1938
 Fort Mitchell, Kenton, KY
 +-- **EDWARD COURTNEY PIATT⁵ BLAKELY**, b. 1908
 Covington, Kenton, KY, d. 1918 Fort Mitchell, Kenton, KY
 +-- **JANE ASHTON⁵ BLAKELY** is still living
 +**JOHN RANDOLPH⁵ WOODROUGH**, b. 1909 Cincinnati,
 Hamilton, OH, m. 1935 Fort Mitchell, Kenton, KY, d. 1970 Cincinnati, Hamilton, OH
 +-- **STEPHENS BLAKELY⁶ WOODROUGH** is still living
 +-- **LAURA JANE⁶ WOODROUGH** is still living
 +-- **SUSAN ELIZABETH⁶ WOODROUGH** is still living
 +-- **JOHN RUFFNER⁵ BLAKELY**, b. 1911 Fort Mitchell, Kenton,
 KY, d. 1999 Fort Mitchell, Kenton, KY
 +**JANE⁵ GRANT**, m. 1966 Ft. Mitchell, Kenton, KY, d. 1980
 Ft. Mitchell, Kenton, KY
 +-- **PAUL LENDRUM⁵ BLAKELY**, b. 1918 Covington, Kenton,
 KY, d. 1918 Fort Mitchell, Kenton, KY
 +**MARGARET HAMILTON⁴ JAMES**, b. 1888 Lawrenceburg, IN, m.
 1929 NY, d. 1974 Ft. Mitchell, Kenton, KY
 +-- **PAUL LENDRUM⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1880 Covington, Kenton, KY, d.
 1943 New York, NY
 +-- **ELIZABETH ASHTON⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1883 Covington, Kenton, KY,
 d. 1948 Georgetown, 'Cardome', KY
 +-- **SUSAN HAUGHTON⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1885 Covington, Kenton, KY, d.
 1981 Georgetown, 'Cardome', KY
 +-- **MARY LOUISE RUDD⁴ BLAKELY**, b. 1886 Covington, Kenton, KY,
 d. 1966 Albuquerque, NM
 +**LEWIS CARROLL⁴ BALDWIN SR**, m. 1918 Covington, Kenton, KY

+-- LEWIS CARROLL⁵ BALDWIN JR is still living
 +VIRGINIA⁵ BRADY is still living
 +-- JOHN LENDRUM⁵ BALDWIN is still living
 +BARBARA⁵ ANDERSON is still living
 +-- LAURIE ALOYSIUS RUFFNER⁴ BLAKELY, b. 1894 Newport, Cambell, KY, d. 1971 Lexington, Fayette, KY
 +FRANCES⁴ SHOUSE, b. 1899, m. 1920 Lexington, Fayette, KY, d. 1983
 +-- ALICE THERESA³ BLAKELY, b. 1845 Pittsburgh, PA, d. say 1850 Pittsburgh, PA
 +-- JOSEPH MARIAM³ BLAKELY, b. 1847 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1912 Dunkirk NY, NY
 +-- VIRGINIA ROSE³ BLAKELY, b. 1852 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1856 Collins Township, Allegheny, PA
 +-- WILLIAM² BLAKELY, b. circa 1806 England
 +-- ALICIA² BLAKELY, b. 1810 England, d. 1901
 +CALVIN² DODGE, b. 1809 CT, m. 1832 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1863 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA
 +-- MARY³ DODGE, b. 1836 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA
 +(--?--)³ CURLEY
 +-- JAMES B³ DODGE, b. 1837 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA, d. 1895
 +-- SARAH ANNA³ DODGE, b. 1840 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA
 +-- JOHN CHRYSOSTOM³ DODGE, b. 1842 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA
 +-- FRANCIS (FRANK) W.³ DODGE, b. 1845 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA
 +JANE (SARAH OR JENNIE)³ KELLEY, b. 1850 Des Moines, Iowa
 +-- FRANK⁴ DODGE, b. 1872 Iowa
 +-- ALICE ROSE³ DODGE, b. 1848 Pittsburgh, Allegheny, PA
 +(--?--)³ ADAMS, b. Birmingham, AL
 +WILLIAM H.³ MCFADDEN, b. 1854 Washington, D.C, mar. after 1880, d. Washington, D.C.
 +-- STELLA ROSE⁴ MCFADDEN, b. 1885, d. 1912
 +BERNARD M.⁴ FOCKE, m. 1910 Washington, D.C
 +-- WILLIAM JAMES⁴ MCFADDEN, b. 1887, d. 1887 Thoroughfare, VA
 +-- ARTHUR E.⁴ MCFADDEN, b. 1891, d. before 1920
 +-- ELLA³ DODGE, b. 1855
 +-- JOHN SIMPSON² BLAKELY, b. circa 1812 England, d. 1877 St. Louis, MO
 +JEMIMA CECELIA² FORTUNE, b. 1809 PA, m. 1833 Pittsburgh, PA, d. 1898
 +-- MARY IMOGENE³ BLAKELY, b. 1834 PA, d. 1920 Benton Harbor, MI
 +-- WALTER JAMES³ BLAKELY, b. 1843, d. 1912 St. Louis, MO
 +MARY J.³ (--?--), b. 1837, d. 1881 St. Louis, MO
 +NANNIE³ HAWES, b. 1853, m. after 1881, d. 1903
 +-- IMOGENE⁴ BLAKELY, b. circa 1884, d. 1948 St. Louis, MO
 +-- ADA ELIZABETH³ BLAKELY, b. 1847 OH, d. 1866 St. Louis, MO
 +-- FRANCES MARY³ BLAKELY, b. 1849 OH, d. 1939

INTRODUCTION

In 1999, using information I had gathered, and a lot that had been given to me by my sister-in-law, Margot Woodrough, I wrote a short history of the BLAKELY family, as well as other branches of our family tree, and gave copies to my children, nieces and nephews. I wanted to kindle in them, or their children, an interest in genealogy. If someone takes up where we left off, they'll have a starting point. If no one carries on, at least they will know from whence they came.

I had titled my work "The Blakely Boys" which today is no longer the case. We discovered a sister that, for some unknown reason, had never been mentioned in any of the family memorabilia. By discovering this unknown sister, we also found the matriarch, Sarah!

First and foremost, thanks to my husband, Ron, for giving me the time and space necessary to compile all of the data, compose it into readable form, and then go through endless re-writes to complete it.

I give credit and thanks to Margot for all of the work she has done throughout the years; for spending endless hours going through old trunks and boxes in the attic at "Beechwood"; for copying and keeping every old letter and scraps of paper she would come across; for writing to every conceivable institution in several states requesting information, and storing away all of this accumulated data. It would be impossible to put together any kind of a family history without her and her files! And thanks to my brother, Steve Woodrough, for taking his valuable time to read my little composition and offering his help with format and text.

Without the help and information supplied by Kay Ryan, her database crammed full of notes from her Aunt Aileen, transcripts of newspaper articles and obits, I could not have written much about Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan, her husband and accomplished children.

A special thanks to John K. Hayes for solving some of the mystery surrounding Alice [Blakely] Dodge her husband and children.

What information is contained herein is documented and where there is speculation, I will so state, using the oft-heard words in the genealogy field of "probably," "about" or "around."

CHAPTER I

**Sarah Haughton Blakely, the matriarch
and her son, William Blakely**

CHAPTER II

**James B. Blakely and Susanna Smyth, his wife
and their children:**

- 1. William,**
- 2. Sarah Ann, Sister Beatrice**
- 3. Lavinia Harvey, and her husband, Sebastian Joseph Wimmer
and their three children: Wilfried, Ernest and Sebastian Jr.**
- 4. Mary Louise, and her husband, John Becan Ryan
and their nine children: Mary Louise, Effie Virginia, James Cornelius, Anna Agnes, John
Becan Jr., Francis Xavier, Susan Josephine, Josepha Aileen, Beatrice Grace**
- 5. Susanna Xavier**
- 6. William James and his wives, Josephine Luhr and Mary Gensheimer**
- 7. Laurie John and Lilly Hudson Lendrum, his wife
and their six children: Stephens Laurie, Paul Lendrum, Elizabeth Ashton, Susan Haughton,
Mary Louise, Laurie John Jr.**
- 8. Alice Theresa**
- 9. Joseph Miriam, Father Aloysius**
- 10. Virginia Rose**

CHAPTER III

**Alice Blakely and Calvin Dodge, her husband
and their children:**

- 1. Mary**
- 2. James B.**
- 3. Sarah Ann**
- 4. John Calvin**
- 5. Francis W.**
- 6. Alice**
- 7. Ella**

CHAPTER IV

**John Simpson Blakely and Jemima Cecelia Fortune, his wife
and their children:**

- 1. Mary Imogene**
- 2. Walter James and his wife, Nannie Hawes
and their daughter, Imogene**
- 3. Ada Elizabeth**
- 4. Frances Mary, called "Aunt Frank"**

CHAPTER I

SARAH HAUGHTON BLAKELY

And her son,

WILLIAM BLAKELY



**This is a copy of a daguerreotype.
Believed to be a picture of SARAH BLAKELY
(b. 1779 - d. July 8, 1854)**

Sarah Blakely is the matriarch of this BLAKELY family. We discovered the maiden name of Sarah Haughton hidden away in a faded letter written by one of her descendants to a cousin in 1926.

But who was Sarah's husband; what happened to him? Did he accompany his wife and young children to America, only to perish shortly after arriving? Did he die young back in England, and leave a widow with small children? So many questions remain unanswered. In all of the family stories, writings and obituaries that have been collected, the given name of Sarah's husband has never been mentioned.

Sarah Haughton was born about 1779 somewhere in England. Family stories mention Lancashire, so it could be Liverpool, Manchester or places in between. If you look at a map of the area today, you will find a strange occurrence; there are

three towns in or near the Manchester area of Lancashire County, England. They are Haughton, Blackley (pronounced Blakely) and Ashton-Under-Lyne. Sarah was the sister of John Haughton and married a Mr. Blakely around 1800. So we feel that this is the area where our Blakely family originated.

Sarah [Haughton] Blakely and her four children, James B., William, Alice and John Simpson arrived in America in 1819. How very difficult it must have been for Sarah and her children to leave the country of their birth, for whatever reason, and dare to take passage on a ship bound for a distant land. Imagine a mother, just 40 years old, choosing to leave her family and friends behind and take her young children to a far away country. And what of the children? How hard it must have been for them, giving up all they had known and loved since birth! We can only presume that Sarah had connections in America; someone she knew and trusted, to assist her and her children when they arrived here; to accompany the family from the port of entry to the town of Pittsburgh and help them settle in; to guide the children in their education and even find an apprenticeship for James, her eldest son.

When Sarah and her family arrived in Pittsburgh, it was not the bustling city known today. The population was just 7248. There were no banks or a public library. A city water system didn't exist until eight years later, in 1828, when the city reservoir was completed and the lift station was ready for service. Life in the early eighteen hundreds was not easy; it was both difficult and strenuous.

We have found these few clues to Sarah [Haughton] Blakely. We know that on November 4, 1832 Alice Blakely, was baptized at St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The baptismal record shows the name as "Alice Blakely"; however, this was Sarah because the sponsors were Laurentis and Maria Michel (pronounced Mitchell) and James, the eldest son of Sarah, was married to a sister of Maria Michel. According to records received from the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Sarah was an Anabaptist convert. Anabaptists did not believe in infant baptism "because they denied the readiness of an infant to receive baptism on New Testament terms". This may explain why no records of christenings of Sarah's four children have been found in England.

The idea that Sarah Blakely was a widow when she arrived in America was reinforced when she was located in the 1830 census, living in Bayardstown, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Since there are no names listed, other than head of household, we can only presume the two children living with her are William and Alice.

In 1840 Sarah Blakely disappeared from the census as head of the household. She was located living with her son, James and his family in the same area of Pittsburgh; possibly in the same house they occupied in 1830.

The next record of Sarah is the 1850 census of Pittsburgh where she is living with her daughter and son-in-law, Alice and Calvin Dodge. Her age is given as 70.

The last record is referred to as "SLB's Dates to Remember." Stephens L. Blakely, grandfather of the author and great-grandson of Sarah, compiled a list of important dates for the Blakely family, including birthdays, anniversaries, deaths, and similar events. Unfortunately, a few are not accurate but most are quite correct. One of the entries is for July 8, 1854: "Sarah Blakely died, aged 75 years." We searched for a death notice, hoping it would reveal the elusive name of her husband, but so far none has been found.

A letter, written in 1904 by Sarah's grandson, Walter Blakely, addressed to his cousins Laurie J. Blakely and Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan says, in part:

This ground was donated by your father [James Blakely] in the early days of East Liverpool [Ohio] for cemetery purposes. A new cemetery having been laid out, the old one is practically--although not formally--abandoned; only a few graves remaining yet undisturbed. Our grandmother [Sarah] Blakely's remains were removed by me [Walter Blakely] nearly two years ago to the new cemetery.

From this letter, therefore, we know that Sarah was taken to East Liverpool, Ohio after her death and buried in the hallowed ground donated to the town by her son, James.

It might have been better if Walter had left Sarah where she was, rather than moving her to the nice, new cemetery. He neglected to note the name or location of the "new Cemetery" and several searches failed to locate any record of the final resting place of Sarah Blakely.

We can only surmise what Sarah's life was like. We know the family settled in Bayardstown, now a part of Pittsburgh known as the strip district. Apparently her sons and daughter prospered and more likely than not made sure their mother was well cared for in her declining years. One of the deep mysteries of the Blakely family is why, in all the information recorded on all of the children, there is no mention of their father; only their mother, Sarah. It is, also, curious why nothing was ever written about their sister, Alice Blakely.

Sarah and her husband had four children; James B., William, Alice and John Simpson. What follows is their story.

William Blakely

Second Child of Sarah Haughton Blakely

Very little is known about William Blakely. We have only one public record of William, which is his application for naturalization, filed in 1830 in the District Court of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. It states:

Blakely, William (1830); born in England; sailed from Liverpool and arrived in Philadelphia; 13 years, now age 24 years (1830). Sponsor: James Blakely, of Pittsburgh.

We can calculate the year of his birth by his stated age of 24 on a document dated 1830, thus we know William Blakely was born in 1806.

In their applications for naturalization, the brothers James and William seem to disagree on their port of entry to America. James said Baltimore; William said Philadelphia. There are very few printed lists of passengers arriving in America prior to 1820, since such lists were not required to be made or kept. Accordingly the correct port cannot be determined.

In the 1830 census of Bayardstown, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania there are two children living in the household of Sarah Blakely; a daughter, age 15-20 and a son over 20, under 30. It is therefore presumed that William was still living with his mother and sister when he applied for naturalization.

Another reference to William Blakely was recently discovered. His brother, James Blakely, became a victim of the panic of 1857 and was forced "assign," or file bankruptcy. The name William Blakely is recorded a couple of times in the papers filed with the bankruptcy court. William is named as owing James a due bill in the amount of \$150.00, dated Nov. 30, 1849. Thus William may have been living and working either in the Pittsburgh area or possibly in East Liverpool, Ohio with his younger brother, John Simpson Blakely. He lived close enough to borrow \$150.00 from his brother, which was a lot of money in 1857 terms. The record indicates a payment of 1¢, leaving a balance owed of \$149.99. Nothing further is noted.

There is no baptismal record for William in the Diocese of Pittsburgh; nor is there a record of a marriage there. The search for more information on William Blakely continues.

CHAPTER II

JAMES B. BLAKELY

And

SUSANNA SMYTH

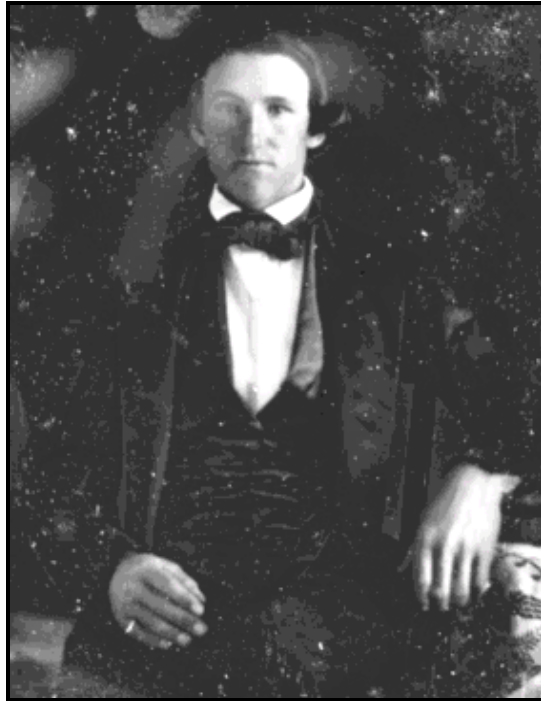
And their children

JAMES AND SUSANNA BLAKELY



This picture provided by Kay Ryan,
The wife of a descendant of
Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan

JAMES B. BLAKELY



Circa 1830¹

James B. Blakely, the eldest child of Sarah [Haughton] and ----- Blakely, was born on June 15th, 1804, in Lancashire County, England. It is not known for sure, but because of his age when he arrived in America, he probably received most of his education in England. On his application for naturalization, in 1829, he stated he had lived "in or near Pittsburgh since 1819, arriving at the port of Baltimore" in September of that year. Thus, we know that James would have been 15 years old when he, his mother, brother and sister set sail for a new life in America.

Between the years 1819 and 1826 it appears that James did very well. He met and fell in love with Susanna, the daughter of John Edward Smyth and Anna Margaret [Ruffner] Smyth. Since the Ruffners were from a very old line of Catholic families in Pennsylvania, it seems almost certain that some pressure was put on James to convert to Catholicism if he intended to marry their Susanna. James studied the

¹ The identity of James Blakely in this picture is a "guess." It was found among old family pictures, but without an identifying remark.

necessary doctrines and on Christmas Eve, December 24, 1826, James B. Blakely was baptized at St. Patrick's Church in Pittsburgh, with James and Rivina Cummins as his sponsors.

Less than a year after his baptism, James Blakely and Susanna Smyth were married. On November 4, 1827, the marriage was solemnized with a Nuptial Mass at St. Patrick's Church. His bride, Susanna Smyth, was born on September 15, 1804 in Murrinsville, Butler County, Pennsylvania. They were both 23 years old at the time of their wedding. The young couple set up housekeeping in Pittsburgh, where they would continue to live for the next 35 years.

It is believed that James' conversion and marriage to Susanna was a significant influence upon James' brother, John, his sister, Alice, and even his mother, Sarah, all of whom later joined the Catholic Church.

On August 23, 1828, James and Susanna became parents for the first time when their son William was born. It appears from the baptismal records that this child was born, baptized and died on the same day. The sponsors for this child were his uncle, John S. Blakely and grandmother, Sarah [Haughton] Blakely.

The James Blakely family was located in the 1830 census of Bayardstown. In Harris' 1837 Business Directory of Pittsburgh, the James Blakely residence was in Northern Liberties. In the 1840 census, James was located in the Fifth Ward of Pittsburgh. All three place names are the same area of Pittsburgh; a long narrow strip of land between the Allegheny River and Grant's Hill. The following excerpt was taken from the book *Pittsburgh and Allegheny*; published in 1889, page 625:

The boundaries of the city of Pittsburgh remained the same as those of the borough until 1837. Prior to that time a borough had grown up east of the borough line, between the hill and the Allegheny river, known as the "Northern Liberties," but it was generally known as "Bayardstown;" probably the Bayards surveyed and laid it out in lots. It was incorporated as a borough in 1829, and in 1837 was added to the city as the "Fifth" ward.

James wore many "hats" to earn a living for his family and he did quite well. He was invested in land not only in Pennsylvania but also in Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas and even Nebraska.

He invested in the pottery business in East Liverpool, Ohio. In 1847 it was "Woodward & Vodrey; in 1848 it was "Woodward, Vodrey & Booth"; in 1849 it was "Woodward & Blakely". While his brother, John S. was the "Blakely" in this firm; James invested money in the pottery works and was an agent for the company, selling their wares from his office in Pittsburgh.

It appears he was a travel agent, for anyone traveling abroad. One advertisement stated:

EUROPEAN AGENT
James Blakely
European & Passenger Agent

Has for sale sight drafts to any amount on Great Britain and Ireland, and the continent of Europe, via London, Liverpool, Dublin and Belfast, payable at any respectable Banking House in either ENGLAND or IRELAND. Also, in GERMANY, FRANCE, BELGIUM, HOLLAND, DENMARK, SWEDEN, POLAND, HUNGARY, ITALY, NORWAY, RUSSIA, GALICIA, SPAIN, SWITZERLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES and the ORIENT. He is also agent for AMERICAN EUROPEAN EXPRESS & EXCHANGE CO.

Agent for Tapscots Celebrated Line of Liverpool and New York Packet Ships, leaving each city every five days. Letters of credit procured in London, Liverpool and the principal cities of Europe. Office: Corner of Seventh and Smithfield Streets.

James was a Real Estate Broker and Auctioneer in a company called "Blakely & Richey," apparently operating out of the same office at the corner of 7th & Smithfield. Another advertisement of James' as European Agent gives the location of that office at 186 Wood Street, adjoining Liberty, indicating he either moved to a larger office or had two offices.

He advertised "Premium Ware," products of Woodward, Blakely & Co., manufacturers of Rockingham and Yellow Cane Ware, in East Liverpool, Ohio. His sample room was at 186 Wood Street, which was the same as his travel agency address.

James served as an alderman in the town of Pittsburgh, listing this as his occupation in the Business Directory of 1837 and in the census of 1850, a position he held for 20 years.

As a successful businessman, James could afford to build a large, three-story brick home in the Lawrenceville area just outside of Pittsburgh, which the family called "Hillside Home". From descriptions given in the diaries of his son-in-law, it overlooked the Allegheny River. Apparently, they had several guest rooms or displaced the children from their rooms, since there were many instances recorded in the Wimmer diaries when visiting priests, perhaps five at a time, were welcomed into the home and provided a place to stay overnight.

Ever the zealous convert to Catholicism; James contributed large sums of money and tracts of land to churches and communities. He sold two acres of land to the town council of East Liverpool, Ohio for \$2.00, the area to be used as a cemetery. He donated \$400.00 to build a new church in East Liverpool, and in alliance with

four other men, even donated three lots on which the church was built. He did not live in East Liverpool, but he always held an interest in the community. He was a benefactor to numerous charities and was instrumental in raising the money to build Mercy Hospital for the Sisters of Charity, which was completed in 1847.

The local panic of 1854, followed by the national panic in 1857 caught James Blakely in its wake, and he was forced to assign all of his assets for the benefit of his creditors and declare bankruptcy in 1857. James gave the matter over to John J. Mitchell, eldest son of his brother-in-law, Laurence Michel. Family files recently deposited in the Ohio Historical Society archives contain a copy of the declaration that included a listing of all of his lands and properties, his offices, homes and household goods and their value. He held title to 1442 acres of land in Minnesota, 48 tracts, or lots, in the town of East Liverpool, Ohio, plus ½ interest in another 43. He owned 180 acres in Wisconsin, and 3,488 acres in fourteen different counties of Iowa, in addition to 400 acres of ground in Lucas and Van Wert Counties of Ohio. Other holdings included 3 acres and 1/5th interest in the pottery works in East Liverpool, 2 lots in Cleveland, Ohio; 10 lots in Superior City, Wisconsin; six lots in Kansas City and five in Omaha, Nebraska; and seventy six lots in six cities in Minnesota. He owned at least two houses, "Hillside Home," in the Lawrenceville area and another home in Collinsville. The value of his estate, at the time of the assignment, was appraised at \$52,509.58. He was allowed to keep just \$500.00 worth of household goods.

The following notice appeared in the Pittsburgh newspaper:

"NEW ADVERTISEMENTS"

Assignee's Sale of Real Estate--On Tuesday, the 15th day of November 1859, at 2 o'clock p.m. I will offer at Public Sale at the COURT HOUSE in the city of Pittsburgh, Allegheny Co., Pa. all the rights, title, interest and claim of James Blakely of, in and to the following described real estate, to wit...[followed by a lengthy list of properties to be sold, taking up an entire column.]

It was signed by William H. Campbell, who was appointed by the court as trustee for the bankrupt estate, to replace John J. Mitchell who resigned as trustee.

In the original declaration, there are pages full of names of people who owed James money, but because of the run on banking institutions none of it was collectable. New York bankers had almost immediately placed severe restrictions on even the most routine transactions and the local institutions picked up the trend as well.

James and his family remained in Pittsburgh only a short time after he declared bankruptcy. In 1860 they lived in Ward 6 of Pittsburgh and his personal estate was valued at \$600. He was 56 years old. James was an optimist. Down but not out, he went to St. Marys, Pennsylvania, which is 127 miles northeast of Pittsburgh, about 1861, and chose this as a place to begin anew. Most likely, he chose St. Marys

because that is where his daughter, Sarah Ann had entered the Convent, and another daughter, Lavinia was living with her husband. With what little he had left, he rented a house and opened a bookstore. Susanna and three of their children, Laurie, Sue X. and Joseph, followed some months later, leaving the home they had lived in for so many years and the town they had called home for thirty five years.

In St. Marys, James filled various positions of trust. He remained involved in politics and was elected burgess from 1862 to 1863. In May of 1863, James Blakely was elected School Superintendent of the common schools of Elk County and was re-elected in 1866. During his tenure of six years, he witnessed a remarkable growth in the school system.

Following the Civil War, James applied for and was appointed to the position of Postmaster of the borough of St. Marys in Elk County Pennsylvania. The President of the United States signed the order appointing him. He kept that appointment for the remainder of his life. James continued to be an active businessman, his store being the headquarters for books, stationery and religious articles.

James B. Blakely, the eldest of Sarah Blakely's children, died on June 19, 1882. A tribute states in part:

His sufferings during his last illness were so intense, and his resignation to the Divine will so perfect, that it may be hoped he thus satisfied for any transgressions of his past life, yet let not his friends forget that the infinite justice of God can not bear the slightest stain, therefore let them, and let all who read this tribute, pray for the repose of his soul, that his time of probation may be shortened, and that Eternal Rest may soon be his portion in the realms of Perpetual Light.

His obituary, published in the Elk County Gazette on June 22, 1882, reads in part:

Mr. Blakely was born in Liverpool, England June 13th 1804, consequently was four days over the age of 78 years when he died. He emigrated to this country with his parents in 1817. Landing in Baltimore, his father moved to Pittsburgh with his family. Deceased lived in Pittsburgh over forty years and during that time was prominently identified with the leading interests of that city both religious and political, having filled an unusually large number of offices in that time. He was originally a member of the Episcopalian denomination, but embraced the Catholic faith about the 24th year of his age, of which he has since been a zealous and consistent member. He married Miss Susan Smyth, a member of one of the oldest Catholic families in this country about the year 1828. His wife is an American lady, there being eight generations of her family lying in American ground before her. Mr. Blakely moved to St. Mary's in 1862, he

coming here some months before his family joined him.

He enjoyed excellent health until about three years ago, since when he had been gradually failing. He had the misfortune to fall and fracture the thighbone of his right leg several weeks ago, which served to hasten his death. Mr. Blakely was a remarkable man, and is the father of a remarkable family. Probably the most noted for refinement and intelligence of any in this section of the country.

He was a man of excellent social qualities, and had hosts of friends who will read this notice of his death with sorrow. The funeral will take place from the St. Mary's Catholic Church this Thursday morning at 9 o'clock. Deceased leaves an aged widow and several sons and daughters, with a large number of grandchildren to mourn for him. Peace to his soul.

His son-in-law, Sebastian Wimmer, recorded this in his diary of 1882:

Monday, June 19th--Venie [his wife Lavinia] came home at 8 a.m. but was soon called down again, as her father's [James Blakely] death was momentarily expected. He finally died peacefully at 11.25 at noon. Telegraphed to Abbot, L. J. Blakely [James' son], Covington, Anton in Erie, John Gensheimer, Sr. Erie, Kate Donnelly, Latrobe, Mrs. Wallace, New York, Frank S. Gannon, High Bridge and Rev. Alois Blakely [James' son], W. Hoboken."

Two days later Sebastian wrote this:

June 22nd--Most magnificent weather; quite warm. At 9 a.m. funeral procession moved from residence of late James Blakely (my father in law) whom we buried today from German Church. Father Aloysius Blakely celebrated Requiem High Mass, Father Celestine, Deacon; Father Edmund, Sub-Deacon. Mr. Ignatius Garner played the organ. The following gentlemen acted as pall bearers: Messrs. Andrew Kaul, Charles McVean, James Riley, General McGill, Michael Brenner and John Krug. In 1st carriage rode mother [Susanna Blakely], Sue and myself; in 2nd Kaul's, Mrs. Ryan, Venie, Sebbie and Mrs. Dodge; in 3rd (my own) Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Weidenborner, Mrs. Luhr and Ada McGill. Got back to Blakely's at 11½ a.m. Father Alois rode with Dr. Russ. All day at my house with above guests."

To explain briefly, Father Aloysius, (Sebastian called him Fr. Alois), was the son of James; Sue, Venie and Mrs. Ryan were daughters and Mrs. Dodge was his sister. Other people mentioned were residents of St. Marys and very good friends.

Susanna [Smyth] Blakely lived another three years, attended by her daughter,

**Susanna Xavier. She joined her husband in death on November 12, 1885.
Here is the published account of her death:**

Thursday evening, at six o'clock, after an illness of fourteen weeks, Mrs. Susan Blakely, wife of James Blakely, departed this life at the ripe age of 81 years. She had been in feeble health for sometime previous to her late illness during which her sufferings were intense. She bore her affliction with divine resignation; no word of complaint marred the beauty of her patient endurance. She was in a precarious condition some weeks before her demise, and several times was thought to be dying, but her wonderful power of resistance proved effectual in warding off the approach of Death, and she was spared to her dear ones for a little while longer. She was bravely cheerful from first to last. The purity and holiness of her life and character are beyond expression, and her influence will ever be a beacon light to those who knew and loved her. She always had a gentle word and smile for one and all. When suffering most, her submission to the will of God became but the greater. She was sustained by His hand that was waiting to help her over the dark river into the glory of eternal rest.

James and Susanna Blakely were laid to rest in St. Marys Catholic Cemetery, St. Marys, Pennsylvania. Today, there is no record in the custodial office of the cemetery to identify their final resting places. An heir of their son, Dr. William Blakely, signed over the deed to the cemetery lot in 1938 to one Joseph Luhr. Unknown to this heir, this lot already contained the remains of three people; James and Susanna Blakely and their daughter-in-law, Josephine [Luhr] Blakely. The family believes they are still buried on what is now one of the LUHR lots in St. Marys Catholic Cemetery.

James and Susanna Blakely were the parents of 10 known children. An obituary of one of their children, mentioned, "he was one of 13 children," but records of only 10 have been found. The following pages contain their stories, in the order of their birth, omitting the first child, William, who has already been mentioned as having been born, baptized and died on August 23, 1828.

The other children were:

1. Sarah Ann

2. Lavinia Harvey [Venie]

3. Mary Louisa

4. Susanna Xavier

5. William James

6. Laurie John

7. Alice Theresa

8. Joseph Miriam [Fr. Aloysius]

Sarah Ann Blakely

On September 17, 1829, the second child of James and Susan [Smyth] Blakely was born. Sarah Ann Blakely was baptized on September 20th, 1829, at St. Paul's Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with Laurence and Maria Mitchel as her sponsors.

She spent her childhood in the home of her parents, called "Hillside Home," in Pittsburgh, attending a Catholic primary school until her fifth year, and accompanying her parents to church, either in Lawrenceville or across the Monongahela River in Sharpsburg.

About 1839, at the age of 10, Sarah Ann left her home in Pittsburgh and went to the Benedictine Academy in St. Marys, Pennsylvania, where she attended school until the summer of 1858. In the chronicles of St. Joseph's, 1852 - 1880 it is written: "Late in 1858, some postulants of English descent came to our convent. Among them was Sarah Ann Blakely, who from her fifth year in school was with the Sisters in our Academy. She was, therefore, well educated. Through her many well-to-do people were influenced to send their daughters to our academy."

Following her graduation, she entered the Convent of St. Joseph's in the winter of 1858. She received the Benedictine habit and the name Sister Beatrice in the spring of 1859.

In 1860, at the age of 31, she made her Temporary Vows, which last for three years, and was appointed as the first Directress of the Benedictine Academy in the 1860-61 school year. She made her Perpetual Vows in 1863, and remained Directress of the Academy until March of 1865.



Sr. Beatrice Blakely

Sister Beatrice Blakely, accompanied by three other nuns went to Nebraska City, where they established the Nebraska foundation on March 30th, 1865. This convent, named The Immaculate Conception, thrived under Mother Beatrice Blakely's leadership.

She labored there, guiding her students and the other nuns serving with her for the next 20 years. Her health failing, she retired to the Annunciation Convent in Nebraska City where she died on March 14, 1882, at the age of 53. She was buried in the parish cemetery there.

There were many notices of her death published, this one appeared on March 15th in Nebraska City:

St. Benedict's Church was crowded yesterday morning by friends to pay their last respects to the dead Mother Beatrice Blakely, who was so greatly beloved by them while on earth. The church was appropriately draped and festooned with evergreens and beautiful flowers. The services were very impressive, Father Emanuel officiating, assisted by Father Fitzgerald of Sheridan. The remains were interred in the yard of the Academy of the Annunciation, and were borne to the grave by twelve young ladies, scholars of that school, followed by a concourse of people. Father Emanuel delivered this eulogy: Remember man, thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return. The Almighty was pleased to take from this world, from this valley of tears, the soul of our beloved sister, Mary Beatrice Blakely,

aged 52 years, after a long and painful illness. She was a most accomplished lady, endowed with great faculties; she was inspired with the greatest zeal and energy in her holy vocation. At the same time, she was a very devout, charitable Christian, teaching and preaching by her edifying example.

She was born 52 years ago of pious, very prominent and rich parents, who spared no time, no pains, no trouble to give to their beloved daughter not only a first-class, pious religious education, but to also have her educated in all the branches of modern science and fine arts. From early childhood until she entered the convent, she attended the very best of academies and selected convent schools and graduated with great distinction. Having received such a superior education, she was, in society, one of the most refined and accomplished young ladies. She moved in the highest circles of society and was loved and admired by all. The most prominent, promising young men wished to marry her. One more lucky than the others, who were refused, was even engaged to her, but finally was discarded for the sake of a more desirable lover.

Great now was the struggle and agony of this grand, faithful handmaiden of the Lord. For some time she was wavering and doubting whom of the two lovers she should select, but her piety and devotion for the best of all lovers conquered. She decided to despise all the riches, all the honors, all the pleasures of this world and to sacrifice the remainder of her life to the service of Him who gave His precious life to purchase her soul.

When her health was failing and too tender to undergo all the hardships of the religious life, she was sent by her Superior to Baltimore, to a milder climate, to recruit her health, but without any visible change for the better. As she was of a very delicate constitution, she was advised to leave the order and stay again with her parents. Almost all children feel happy and like to stay with their parents, but that was not the case with our devout and faithful handmaid of the Lord. She found no rest, no peace until she could again lead a contemplative and holy life in a religious house. For this purpose she selected, this time, the Order of St. Benedict, one of the poorest houses, to make herself useful.

In 1858 she entered the Order of St. Benedict at St. Marys in Elk County, Pennsylvania. For several years she was Directress of that flourishing academy until she was asked for by Father Augustin Wirth, Prior of Atchison, and sent by her superior to take charge of the mission in Nebraska City. She succeeded through her zeal, energy and skillful economy to make the academy in Nebraska City a

flourishing and useful institution. But alas, she soon found that true happiness is not in this world. After having under gone trials and tribulations, her health began to fail. She resigned her responsible office as Superior. Physicians advised her to change climate for the sake of her health. She went to Cincinnati, where she had some relations, and employed the most experienced and skillful doctors for two years. The disease, however, which she had contracted, was incurable and absolutely defied all the skill of the physicians, and the power of the strongest medicines. After she was informed by her doctors that they could do no more for her, that there was no hope, that her health would not be restored, she desired to come home and spend the few days she had left in the midst of her sisters, and died among them. She came back to Nebraska City about six months ago and was ever since confined to her bed and suffered, sometimes, excruciating pain, but always with the greatest patience and resignation to God's holy will.

She never murmured or complained; never lost her cheerfulness and amiable disposition. I need not say anything in praise of our beloved Sister, Mary Beatrice. Many of you have been acquainted with her, had to deal with her, loved her, admired and esteemed her highly, and consider her death a great loss for this community and town. Many accomplished young ladies of this state, who have been educated by her, will receive the sad news of her death with feelings of deepest regret, for she understood so well how to endear herself to her pupils.

The good Sister is dead, but she will not be forgotten in this town, in the state by her many friends, or by her pupils. Many will pray for the repose of her departed soul, and no doubt shed many a sweet tear for her. She is now dead, and very probably receives now, already, her reward for her labors, sufferings and other heroic acts and virtues. But her labors in the Lord's vineyard are not yet at an end. She lives yet in her pupils, whom she had so well instructed, not only in the branches of modern science, but also in good morals and in Christian doctrine. One of the greatest pleasures she had in this world was to instruct children and prepare them for Holy Communion.

May the Lord reward her for all the good she has done, and may her soul rest in peace.

Mother Beatrice Blakely was laid to rest in the churchyard of the local parish, St. Benedict's in Kearney Nebraska.

In 1888, six years after the death of Mother Beatrice, the convent was closed in Nebraska City and the remaining nuns were admitted to the Atchison community on December 13th of that year.

In November of 1952, while preparing to build a new school at St. Benedict's Parish in Nebraska City, it was necessary to move some of the graves located in the parish cemetery. A letter from Father John Kraus to Mother Mary Isabel at St. Joseph's Convent in St. Marys reads as follows:

Reverend and dear Mother:

In building a new school, I was directed by the Most Reverend Bishop to exhume the bodies of five Benedictine Sisters who had been buried on our parish grounds. I personally opened the graves and handled the bones with as much reverence as possible.

At first, my intentions were to bury their remains in our parish cemetery, which I shall do if you give a negative reply to my request. My request is that if you wish I shall send the remains to you to be buried in your community plot. Many communities are bringing back the bodies of their own who, in the early days, were buried in far away places. If that be your wish I shall gladly comply with it. Mother Augusta of Atchison gratefully directed me to you, even trying to identify the sisters who were buried here. But their records reveal nothing, except the fact that in all probability, Mother Beatrice, the original Superioress, is one of them. Perhaps your files will reveal who they are. I have all their bones in one container, awaiting your word as to their disposal.

The following January, another reply is received by Mother Isabel from Father John Kraus, which reads:

I am so glad that you wrote the second time since your first letter must have gone astray. I have finished packing the remains of the five Sisters that were buried here, and have shipped them to you by freight. On the bill of lading I described them as "religious goods"; otherwise I would have to ship them by express and pay the equivalent of five passenger fares. I was happy to do this for you.

I have consulted all the books, slips of paper, and gossip of the old-timers, trying to identify the Sisters. Mother Beatrice Blakely is the only one that I am certain was buried here. Should I hear of the identification of the others I shall communicate with you. Three of the skulls were fairly well preserved. It was almost as difficult to remove them as to identify them. Everything of their earthly remains I have included in the shipment box.

In February of 1953 the earthly remains of Sarah Ann Blakely came home to St. Marys, Pennsylvania, and were interred at St. Joseph's Convent cemetery.

LAVINIA HARVEY BLAKELY



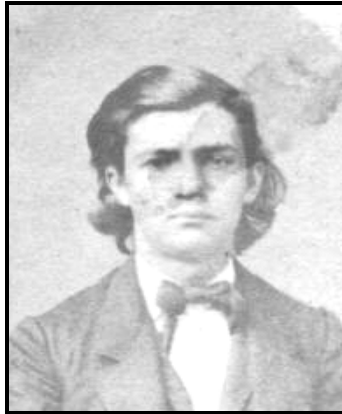
The third child born to James and Susanna was Lavinia Harvey Blakely. Lavinia was born on August 5, 1831 and baptized on August 14th at St. Paul's Church in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania.

She grew up in Pittsburgh and, most likely, was educated at the Benedictine Convent School in St. Marys. Following the completion of her education, she returned to her parents' home in Pittsburgh.

Sometime between 1854 and 1856 she met a dashing young Bavarian named Sebastian Wimmer. Sebastian was born in Thalmassing, Bavaria, on January 5th, 1831, the son and sixth child of George and Theresa [Hahn] Wimmer. At the age of 2, Sebastian and his parents moved to Munich, Germany, where he attended schools and completed his education with a Polytechnical degree and by completing an engineering course.

Sebastian Wimmer was the nephew of Archabbott Boniface Wimmer, who established St. Vincent's Abbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. Sebastian and his uncle, Boniface, arrived in America on January 2, 1851. Arriving in New York, they traveled to the Pittsburgh area where Boniface began his labors in Latrobe, and Sebastian settled in Pittsburgh.

Sebastian Joseph Wimmer



In 1853 Sebastian Wimmer was appointed assistant engineer in the construction of the Allegheny Valley Railroad, having charge of the division between Pittsburgh and Kittening. This project lasted until October of 1856.

Sebastian kept a daily diary for 65 years, the earliest transcribed diary being 1857. Exactly when he met the daughter of James and Susanna Blakely is unknown.

Sebastian and Lavinia were married on February 12, 1857 at St. Paul's Cathedral. In his diary Sebastian makes this entry for February 12th:

This is my wedding day. Last night was at St. Clair Hotel with my friend, L. S. Cantwell, Esq. who acted as groomsman at my wedding. Went out to Mr. Blakely's at 7 a.m. in a carriage in company of Cantwell and started back to the Cathedral from there at 8 o'clock with my bride, Lavinia H. Blakely, and bride's maid Miss Kate McCalley. At 9½ o'clock the ceremony commenced, conducted by my uncle, Father Abbot. After that we started back to the residence of the bride's father, James Blakely, Esq. in order to participate of a sumptuous dinner prepared for the occasion. In the evening at 8 o'clock we started for the east by the 9½ o'clock Express train. Weather delightful during the whole day.

In this country just 6 years, Sebastian was an accomplished civil engineer and had won the heart of Lavinia. Immediately following their marriage, they lived with her parents in the Lawrenceville area of Pittsburgh. By the end of the year 1857, Sebastian has taken a job in the St. Paul - St. Cloud, Minnesota, area and "Venie" and Sebastian moved west.

While living in St. Paul, their son, Wilfried, was born on January 14, 1858. Wilfried was a mentally impaired child, requiring special care all of his life.

They returned to Pittsburgh, in late 1858, where their second child, Ernest Joseph, born on September 15, 1859. Following the birth of their son, Ernest, the little family packed up again and moved to Latrobe, Pennsylvania where Sebastian took accounting classes at the college.

A third son, Sebastian Joseph Wimmer, Jr. was born to the family on July 8, 1862, the family now living back in Pittsburgh, but not for long. In 1863, Sebastian was transferred to St. Marys Pennsylvania to take charge of the contract to complete the Philadelphia & Erie railroad, from Whetham, west of Lock Haven, to Warren, a 143-mile stretch of track.

During that assignment, Sebastian and Lavinia took up permanent residence in St. Marys. Lavinia remained at home; raising their three sons while Sebastian completed his work for the railroad nearby. Next, he traveled to Mexico to supervise the construction of railroads for the Emperor Maxmillian during the time of the American Civil War.

In 1877 a new Catholic church was erected and dedicated in St. Marys. For the first few years Sacred Heart Church was without a bell, but in 1881 this was remedied through the sponsorship of Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Shaefer, Lavinia and Ernest Wimmer, Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Kaul and Mr. & Mrs. Cashman.

In the late 1890's, two of their sons, Ernest and "Sebbie," were married and Wilfried remained at home, running errands for his mother and helping his father around the house and yard. Sebbie graduated from medical school and moved to New York to set up a practice there. Ernest took up the study, and eventually the practice, of law and became the District Attorney of St. Marys. Sebastian continued traveling, wherever he was needed, to survey and supervise the construction of railroads, even into his middle seventies. Though Ernest was married, he and his wife continued to live with Lavinia and Sebastian until they eventually located a home of their own and set up housekeeping.

Tragically, on April 25, 1900 their son, Ernest Joseph Wimmer, who married Marie Louise Scanlon, suffered a fatal heart attack while on a fishing trip to Brockport, Pennsylvania. They were married just five short years; and since they had no children, Marie returned to her parents' home in Philadelphia.

Sebbie married Daisy Louise Schaefer, whom he met in New York. In anticipation of the birth of their first child, Sebbie and Daisy returned to St. Marys and moved in with his parents. The baby, Mary Elizabeth Rose Nanitta Wimmer, was born on August 21, 1893. Sebbie got a job with the railroad and they remained in St. Marys. Following the birth of their second child, "Jack," on March 23, 1897, the restless, gad-about Daisy² took off, leaving the children with a friend in Pittsburgh. When

² The Wimmer Diary contains several mentions of her spending whole days away from the children in the company of women friends. This was unusual for the time.

Daisy didn't return for her children, the friends contacted Sebastian, who traveled by train to Pittsburgh, picked up his two grandchildren and took them back to his home in St. Marys. Sebastian and Lavinia, with the assistance of Sebbie and Wilfried, cared for and raised the two grandchildren. When they reached school age, "Nita" was sent to the Convent boarding school in St. Marys and Jack went to Latrobe, both spending summers and holidays with their grandparents.

Sebastian's world came crashing down on May 4, 1904, when his beloved Venie died suddenly. An article that appeared in the local paper the day of her death explains:

It will be with grief and regret that the many friends of Mrs. Sebastian Wimmer will learn of her sudden and unexpected death. About the middle of last week she complained of a cold. By Saturday she was compelled to take to bed. A physician was called promptly, who discovered that a severe case of pneumonia was developing rapidly. Despite the best efforts of physicians and trained nurses, her condition became critical on Monday. The outlook was a trifle better on Tuesday, but about noon on Wednesday there was a sudden turn for the worse. From this time onward, her life ebbed away slowly and at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, she breathed her last. Mrs. Wimmer was highly regarded by a host of friends who mourn her loss and whose sympathy goes out to the stricken family.

A Requiem High Mass, for the repose of her soul, was held at St. Marys Church, and was largely attended. Following the services, the funeral procession carried her earthly remains to St. Marys Catholic Cemetery where she was buried in the family plot next to her son.

A year after the death of his wife, Sebastian sold his home in St. Marys, gathered his surviving sons and grandchildren and moved to Albany, Minnesota. Wilfried was placed in a caring institution, run by the nuns, in St. Cloud. Nita and Jack to St. Joseph and St. Benedict's Academy, also in St. Cloud. Sebbie gave up his practice in New York to join his father and children in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Sebastian took up residence on his farm in Albany, something he had dreamed of doing for many years. He owned 800 acres of land where for many years his brother, George, and his family lived and raised cattle, draft horses and crops.

Sebastian did not remain idle after arriving at the farm in Albany. Almost immediately, he set about designing and building a new home to accommodate not only himself, but also his nephew and family who were now in charge of working the farm.

Sebastian lived on his beloved farm for the next 14 years. Nearing the age of 90, he reluctantly left his home, and the farm he loved so much in Albany, Minnesota, and traveled back to the Abbey at Latrobe, Pennsylvania, where he spent the final months of his life. On November 29, 1921 Sebastian Joseph Wimmer died, only two

months short of his 91st birthday. Following the Requiem Mass for the repose of his soul, his remains were returned to St. Marys and he was buried next to his wife, Lavinia. Unfortunately, his heirs never set a headstone for Sebastian on the Wimmer plot at St. Marys cemetery.

Their son, Wilfried remained in the home in St. Cloud until his death on March 6, 1913, at the age of 53. Wilfried's body was brought back to St. Marys and interred with his parents in the Wimmer lot; and regretfully, his resting place is not marked with a headstone either.

What happened to Sebbie is unknown, but likely he remained in St. Cloud and raised his two children, Nita and Jack.

MARY LOUISE BLAKELY



Circa 1855

Mary Louise Blakely, the fourth child of James and Susanna, was born on December 12, 1832 and baptized on January 13, 1833 at St. Paul's Church in Pittsburgh. Her Aunt and Uncle, Laurence and Maria Mitchel were her sponsors.

A quote from a tribute paid her after her death says she was educated at the best eastern schools, which probably means the Visitation Convent School, either in Wheeling, West Virginia or in Washington, D. C.

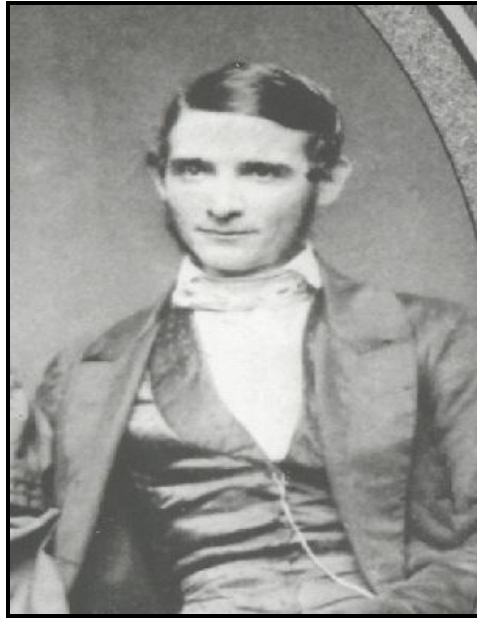
Mary Louise witnessed the conveyance of land given by her father, James Blakely, to the City of East Liverpool in Columbiana County Ohio. According to the deed, this land was to be used for a cemetery and "no one should be turned away." Today, most of this area is a rocky hillside eroded by highway construction; the installation of the Newall Bridge in 1903; and a modern hospital parking lot. The small portion that remains is a park, referred to by the locals as "Skeleton Park."

At the age of 22, having lost her heart to a dashing young man, she became the bride of John Becan Ryan, who was nine years her senior. The marriage took place on September 11, 1855 at St. Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Bishop Michael O'Connor performed the ceremony.

Mary Louise and her new husband left Pittsburgh immediately after their marriage and set up housekeeping in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Highly gifted by nature and educated in the best eastern schools, she was a contributor to various periodicals, her work being distinguished by beauty of thought and gracefulness of expression.

In addition to raising her young children, Mary Louise was a writer, and she was, for a number of years, prominent in religious and literary circles in Cincinnati. Her patriotic and other poems published during and following the Civil War (many of them anonymously) were widely copied and praised. In later years her writings in both prose and verse were of a religious character, and she was a frequent contributor to Catholic magazines and journals.



John Began Ryan c. 1855

John B. Ryan was born in County Cork, Ireland in 1826, the son of Cornelius and Ann Ryan. Cornelius was a very wealthy businessman connected with the construction of canals, and like many other men of his time lost everything during the financial panics of the late 1850s.

John received a tolerably good education, then served an apprenticeship at paper making in Hamilton Ohio. Later he worked in a Mr. Grahams' store that was connected with the paper manufactory.

On January 1, 1851 he entered as partner into the house of Applegate & Company. In March of that year, having been born in Ireland, John applied for and received his naturalization papers becoming an American citizen.

John was working at Applegate & Company when he married Mary Louise Blakely, and he remained there until March 1, 1859. After leaving the firm of Applegate & Co. he worked for "Dodge's Patent Stove & Grate business." Allegedly, this was a precursor to the modern centralized heating system.

By 1860 John and Mary Louise were the parents of three small children, Marie Louise, later called "Minnie" age 4, Effie age 3 and James 1, and by all appearances John must have been prospering as three Irish girls were employed as servants. Possibly these domestics acted as nannies for the children as well as housekeepers and cooks. This large staff was probably needed because by the end of 1860 Mary Louise gave birth to another daughter, Anna.

In the 5 years following the birth of Anna, the family will double, adding John, Jr. in 1863; twins Francis Xavier and Susan Josephine in July of 1865; Josepha Aileen about January, 1867; and Beatrice Grace in 1869.

The baptismal certificate for Francis Xavier says, "baptized during birth," and there are no other records for this infant leading to the presumption that this child, twin to Susan, was stillborn.

How heartbreaking the later part of the year 1866 must have been for Mary Louise and her husband John. On October 31st two of their daughters, five-year-old Anna and the fifteen-month-old infant, Susie succumbed to cholera. These little angels claimed so young for their place in heaven were buried from St. Xavier Church and carried to St. Joseph's Cemetery on the Feast of All Saints, November 1st. This young couple lost three of their nine children.³

According to the census of 1870 the Ryan family was prospering. John listed the value of his real estate holdings as \$39,000. and his personal property at \$10,000. – a considerable amount of money for 1870. The family employed two servants - Julia, an Irish girl and another Julia from Sweden to help with the household chores and the children.

Although the family was prospering, disaster loomed. John Becan Ryan, the well-known businessman of Cincinnati, a man who had served as Councilman for the 13th Ward for several years and, a loving husband and father died suddenly at the age of 45. John suffered a heart attack and died on January 19, 1871. His obituary stated:

In religion, Mr. Ryan was a devoted Catholic. He was a genial and generous friend, a gentleman in the fullest sense of the word, possessed business qualifications of the highest order, was a person of the strictest integrity, a very devoted husband and father, and was respected by all who knew him. He leaves a wife, delicate in health, but of culture and refinement and a lovely family of six children, four girls and two boys, the eldest being fourteen and the youngest two years of age, to mourn his loss.

³ The loss of children was a common experience for people of this era. But, no matter how common it remained a devastating experience for any family.

When her husband died, Mary Louise was only 39 years old, and now had the responsibility of raising six young children alone. A granddaughter, Aileen Ryan, wrote about her grandmother as follows:

She was able, nevertheless, to see that all of them obtained an excellent education. The boys were educated at St. Vincent's Abbey in Latrobe, in the days of the first Abbot, Boniface Wimmer, and the girls went to the Benedictine Academy in Kearney, Nebraska, and the Visitation Academy, either at Wheeling, W. Va. or Washington, D.C. My father told me that his mother even sold her diamonds to buy a Steinway [piano].

Things were not easy for Mary Louise, after the death of her husband. The servants were gone and she was required to seek outside employment in order to support her family. Mary Louise Ryan successfully raised her six children while serving for many years as librarian at the Cincinnati Public Library. Her granddaughter, Aileen Ryan, described her home:

(Her home) in the later part of the century, was a very pretty house with a sandstone front, curved stairway and marble pilaster, and located on the upper side of Garfield Place, across from the present Doctors Building.

In 1887 the heartbreak of losing a child and sister devastated the family. Beatrice Grace, the youngest daughter of John and Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan and sister of Marie, Effie, James, John and Aileen died at the age of 18 years. Mary Louise, now widowed for 16 years, buried her fourth child.

On February 23, 1908 Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan died. A tribute published in the local paper read:

The death of Mrs. Mary Louise Ryan last Sunday was a severe shock to her many friends, as it was not known generally that she was sick. She had been suffering from grip, but it was not considered dangerous until within a short time of her demise. Mrs. Ryan, whose maiden name was Blakely, was a native of Pennsylvania. Highly gifted by nature and educated in the best eastern schools, she was a contributor to various periodicals, her work being distinguished by beauty of thought and gracefulness of expression. A sister was the late Sue Blakely, whose name was well known to the readers of Catholic publications, while Mr. Laurie J. Blakely, editor of the Commercial Tribune and the Very Rev. Aloysius Blakely, C. P. former superior of the missions in Bulgaria and at present connected with the Eastern Passionist Province. are brothers; one of her daughters, Madame Ryan, is a religious of the Sacred Heart. The funeral took place on Wednesday morning from St. Xavier Church at 10 o'clock. The solemn high mass of requiem was celebrated by Rev. James A.

Dowling, S.J., assisted by Rev. Thomas W. Smith as deacon, and Rev. F. X. O'Neils, S. J. as sub-deacon. The services were largely attended, many coming from a distance to pay the tribute of respect to one who, at all times proved herself a true friend, as she was ever a model Christian woman. May her soul rest in peace.

Mary Louise and John B. Ryan were the parents of nine children. Their surviving sons and daughters were:

1. Marie Louise

2. Effie Virginia

3. James Cornelius

4. John B. Ryan, Jr.

5. Josepha Aileen

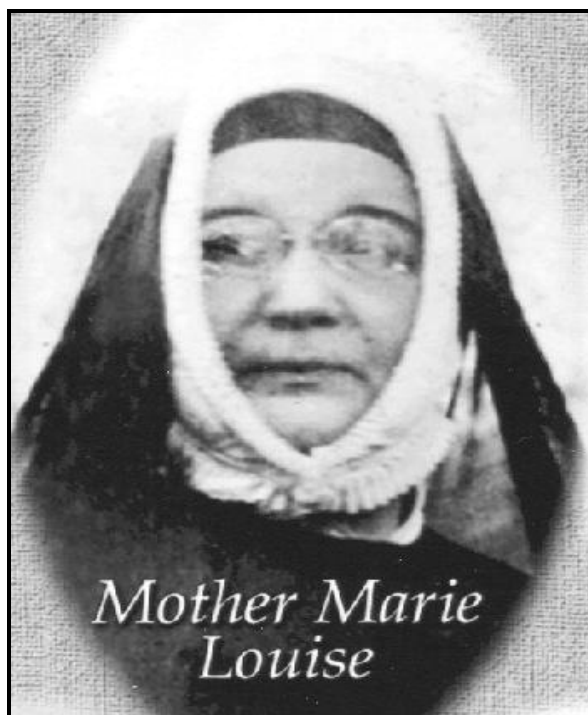
Mary Louise Blakely Ryan



Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan survived her husband by 37 years, and died at the age of 76 on February 23, 1908.

The pages that follow contain the stories of the children who survived her. Though Beatrice Grace preceded her mother in death she was an accomplished child and a brief story of her life is included.

MARY LOUISE RYAN



The first child of John B. and Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan was born on August 19, 1856.⁴ Her name was Mary Louise Ryan. She was educated, as were her sisters, at the Annunciation Academy in Kearney, Nebraska.

Following her graduation, Mary went to the Visitation Academy in Washington, D. C. to teach music. While on a trip to France, she entered the religious order of the Sacred Heart at Conflans, France. Her studies began on August 17, 1887, and after two years of preparation, Mary professed her temporary vows. Unlike the Sisters of the Visitation, who take a new name when they are professed, Mary Louise retained her given name with "Mary" changed to "Marie." Mary Louise professed her final vows to the Order of the Sacred Heart on February 13, 1895 in

⁴ Author's note:

The information provided by Kay Ryan indicated that Mary Louise was born Aug. 19, 1857. This date is also reflected in the information received from the Society of the Sacred Heart, National Archives. This date however cannot be correct as it is impossible for two children to be born of the same mother within two months of each other. The 1850 census records, enumerated in June of that year, lists the three children living in the household at that time, in their order of birth. Mary Louise, age given as 4, followed by Effie V., age 3 and James C., age 1. Baptismal records, obtained from St. Xavier Church, Cincinnati, for Evarista Virginia Ryan indicate she was baptized on October 29th, 1857. Marie, being a year older than Effie, would therefore have been born in the year 1856, not 1857]

Paris, France.

In the 1880s Sister Marie Louise was stationed in Clifton, just north of Cincinnati, Ohio, where she developed many friends who remembered her lovingly 50 years after her death. But she spent most of her religious life in Canada. When the Canadian Vicariat of the Sacred Heart opened up, she volunteered to go there. She spent time at the house on Spring Garden Road in Halifax, Nova Scotia and at Point Grey in Vancouver, British Columbia. She was also stationed at Sault au Recollet in Montreal.

Her health failing, she returned to the Order House in Lake Forest, Illinois, near Chicago where she died on June 12, 1934. She was buried at Calvary Cemetery in Chicago; however her body was later moved to the cemetery at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Lake Forest.

The biography of Mother Marie Louise, from the historical records of the Order of the Sacred Heart, is published in French and has not been translated.

The following is a letter, written by the ailing Marie Louise to her cousin, Sister Mary Agatha [nee, Elizabeth Ashton Blakely daughter of Laurie J. Blakely] two years before Marie's death:

My darling cousin Elizabeth -

On my table I see a letter from you - its date is February 9th - and it asks me to be your Valentine. Ancient history to convict me of long delay in writing you! Believe, my dear Elizabeth, it would not be thus were it possible to do otherwise - but when the dear Lord knocks a person down there is nothing to do but acquiesce to His decision until such time as He sees fit to allow one to get up. What I would like is to be utterly and entirely abandoned to His will - not only abandoned but to be IN His will just as if It and I were one thing - to never hesitate even if it is entirely contrary to nature. I try but I am not there yet. "Won't you please give that bit of relief, dear Lord?" says nature when it should be so glad of the chance to do without the thing it wants! Nature is very strong and if one does not keep hammering at it, everything "goes to smash". And meantime He is so unspeakably good - that is what overwhelms me - how often we say "surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life" and it's HIS goodness and HIS mercy - He who knows so well what an old reprobate He is dealing with! If you were here, my dear old cuz, how much we should have to say on what is dearest! But as various things give out "on a sudden" I must hurry on. Did you read "Sons and Daughters Of God" by cousin Paul in *America* April 30? It is so beautiful that I cannot express what it makes me feel. I read it yesterday morning and again in the evening and both times my eyes were wet. Paul gives emphasis to two things: Charity and Gratitude -

those lovely flowers that bloom in God's gardens. But the most lovely word of all written by that poor Negro woman who wanted to express her gratitude: "If it hadn't been that you had the love of God in your heart my child would have been crippled maybe all her life...." the love of God in your heart! How exactly and how beautifully that poor woman goes right back to the fountain head whence all goodness, all that is worth while. Now if you have not read that paper, please do so soon. Read it slowly - let it sink in. Have you the graduates this year? Make them read it too and show them how to get from it all the wonderful, beautiful, true philosophy that makes it rich. May 5th - anniversary of the day on which I entered, so many years ago. You were a baby then, and now you are a holy nun doing the Master's work these many years! And Susanne, how is she? And has she still charge of the children? How many years that was my employment here in this very house, where now I can only "sit and spin". Do you remember that lovely summer that you and Mama and Effie came to visit me? And Rev. Mother Lewis, that wonderful, incomparable hostess - she is now Superior at Norton - and so many of those who were with us then have "gone into the Land of Light". Before finishing, I want to ask if you have read Dom Marston - his life and works? Among many striking things, this impresses me particularly: that he never seemed to lose a single grace - and with such simplicity and ease did he use each grace for himself and for others. He was a beautiful soul - loving our Lord ardently - loving his fellow men as our Lord would. He has many Jesuit eulogists - Dominicans, also, and others. I am just now finishing his life and letters "Un Maitre de la Vie Spirituelle" and am going to ask for "Le Christ Vie de l'Ame" - his books are done into English for those who prefer English to French.

Now it is time for me to stop - I don't know when I have written so long a letter but my head is getting off the track so I can not do any more. Love to all your dear ones - my dear ones - I hope and pray that dear Susanne is better and can go on with the work she does so well. Always my darling Elizabeth your loving cousin in CJM.

Mary Louise Ryan - rsc. M

May 6, 1932

Doesn't this letter give you a feeling for the depth of her love for God and her absolute commitment His Divine will? Because it is so moving, we chose to include it here. It is copied exactly as she typed it - all in the same paragraph

Evarista Virginia Ryan



Effie V. Ryan.

Circa 1887

The second child of John and Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan, was born on October 26, 1857 in Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio. Her name was Evarista Virginia Ryan and she was baptized on October 29th, at St. Xavier Church in Cincinnati, with John Bowes and Catherine McCully as her sponsors.

The Benedictines at Annunciation Academy in Kearney, Nebraska where her aunt, Sr. Beatrice Blakely, as she was called, was Mother Superior, educated "Effie". Determined to embark on a business career, she prepared herself in typing and shorthand.

There are many newspaper clippings about the career of Miss Effie that are too numerous to list here. The following article was published in 1896 and sums up everything nicely:

HARMON'S ACT

**He Cuts Off Miss Effie V. Ryan's Official Head.
The Government Building People Much Surprised
Finale of Some Interesting Correspondence Between Here and
Washington-Its Sequel.**

The many friends of Miss Effie V. Ryan, who since Oct. 19, 1887

has been the official stenographer on the Court floor of the Government Building, will be greatly surprised to learn that she has been summarily dropped by the order of U. S. Attorney General Judson Harmon.

The Attorney General's final action in this matter has caused no end of talk about the Government Building. Monday there was great surprise manifested in all the departments that Miss Ryan had been dropped. The Attorney General's course regarding Miss Ryan, who is one of the best known Court stenographers in the country by reason of the office she held, is a puzzle to some.

The story is not a new one. Miss Ryan was appointed to a position by Attorney General Garland, under Cleveland's first Administration. W. H. Burnet was the District Attorney. The Fidelity National Bank failure had occurred and the District Attorney's office overrun with work. Mr. Burnet found it absolutely necessary to have relief and secured permission from Garland to have a stenographer. Miss Ryan was appointed. She was soon called into the Fidelity grand jury cases, and was appointed in an official way to take the evidence before the Fidelity grand jury.

The appointment was the first one of the kind ever given a woman in the U. S. Courts in this country, and attracted much attention. The grand jury lasted eleven days, and next she was called into the Harper trial, and took evidence for fourteen days. Next came the Metropolitan Bank cases and the trial of Hopkins; she took this, working thirty-seven days. All this was extra work, not provided for under her appointment. After the trials were over, Mr. Burnet went to Washington City, and after consultation with the authorities, succeeded in getting Miss Ryan retained in office.

There is no U. S. District Attorney's office in the country allowed an appropriation for a stenographer, and as a result every Attorney General since Garland's time has had her position to consider. Miller and Olney both passed on it, and allowed her to remain. When Judge Harmon went to Washington, he too had his attention drawn to the position. One day, about the middle of last February, District Attorney Harlan Cleveland received a letter from Judge Harmon saying that Miss Ryan's service would be abolished.

Judge Sage took the matter up and wrote a letter to the Attorney General, explaining that Miss Ryan was not really employed and paid by the District Attorney's office--that she was employed to do certain kinds of Court work, and that her dismissal was a mistake. Attorney General Harmon telegraphed to District Attorney Cleveland to reinstate Miss Ryan at once.

The last time the Attorney General was in Cincinnati he seems to have looked into the matter further, at the suggestion of some people who are declared to have had an ulterior motive in displacing Miss Ryan. Upon his return to Washington City, he wrote the District Attorney a letter saying that he had reviewed the case and decided to revoke his telegram saying that she be reinstated. The result of the whole business is that Miss Ryan finds herself out after nine years of faithful service. Her work in the Fidelity cases was gratuitous and not paid for. The Government has never rewarded her for this work because there was no appropriation for it.

After her reinstatement in February she was called into several important cases and sworn in as official clerk of the U. S. grand jury--an honor for the first time conferred upon a woman in this country.

There is said to be a little bit of very interesting history back of her displacement by the Attorney General, and those who have kept track of this case declare that it will have an echo of unexpected proportions. Miss Ryan has the friendship of a wide circle of people who will be sorry to learn of the way in which she has been dealt with by Cincinnati's member of President Cleveland's Cabinet.

While Effie was performing her duties as Special Examiner in the Fidelity Bank case, this article appeared in the local newspaper and provides an amusing glimpse of the times in which this pioneer lady lived.

WALKS AND TALKS

A good story is being told about the United Courts and the lawyers' offices: "Miss Effie V. Ryan, the handsome lady stenographer of the United States Court, was some time ago made a Special Examiner for the taking of depositions in the three million dollar suit against the directors of the Fidelity Bank. She has examined a number of witnesses and is the only court of the kind which can report the evidence taken before it and write it out accurately. When she is not examining witnesses, she is diligently engaged transcribing her shorthand notes by means of a typewriter. The other day she issued subpoenas for a half dozen bank officials to appear at 2 o'clock. They came promptly to hand, as bank men usually do. Miss Ryan was sitting at her typewriter, and they paid as little attention to her as she did to them, she, as the court, waiting for the appearance of the District Attorney and other lawyers. The banking bloods became impatient at the delay and began wondering where Mr. Ryan could be. One who assumed to speak the loudest, by reason of seniority,

loudly asserted: "Mr. Ryan should not have summoned us till half past two if he couldn't be on hand himself." Miss Ryan leaned over her typewriter and said never a word. Presently Mr. Wilby, with the lawyers in the case, came into the room. On seeing him, the eldest bank officer shouted out: "Say, Wilby, who is this fellow Ryan?" Wilby looked confused and turned the conversation.

Presently the District Attorney came in and Miss Ryan said to him: "Mr. Burnet, we had better go right on and not wait for the others." The examination then began; but it was some moments before the bankers "caught on" to the fact that the fair stenographer was the court, and the "Mr." Ryan they had been pitching into so vigorously, before her face. In their turn they never said a word, and will not make the same mistake again.

Miss Ryan, when asked about the amusing episode, didn't affirm or deny it, but the mirth in her countenance, as the scene was recalled, was confirmation of the truth to the story.

Mr. Burnet knew nothing of it till a Telegram walker told him the story. He laughed quite heartily about it and remarked: "Oh, that's nothing. Just wait till her court regularly opens and you hear her addressed as Your Honor. Then you'll see some of the people open their eyes in genuine astonishment."

When Harmon so unceremoniously dismissed Effie, there was a bit of an upheaval in the court building. Citing the fact that Effie had never been paid for her services due to an oversight and Government "red tape," she received many offers of assistance and legal advice from her many friends. However, she chose instead to continue her career in the District Attorney's office. She would eventually resign her position and open a school in her home, teaching typing and short hand and the art of stenography.

In her spare time, Effie was interested in the theatrical arts. She and her friends would put on and star in plays. The name of their group was *The Maskers*, and one such play resulted in this write up in the newspaper:

The young society people of the Cathedral, composing the dramatic club called The Maskers, gave two charming and most interesting comedy plays at St. Mary's Hall last evening, to a very large audience. ...Miss Effie Ryan as Louise de la Glaciere was lovely, and won applause as the beautiful wife of the Baron de Glaciere in the third act. The club is certainly entitled to great praise for the artistic and intelligent presentation of two such high class plays, as the one's which furnished the entertainment last evening.

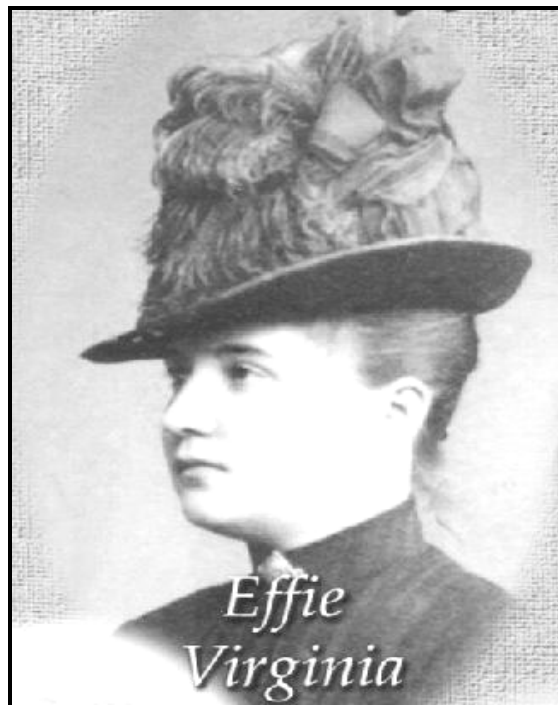
Effie was an active participant in the election of Miss Edith Campbell to the School

Board of Cincinnati, who was the first woman to hold that position. She was also an active member of the Women's Club of Cincinnati for many years.

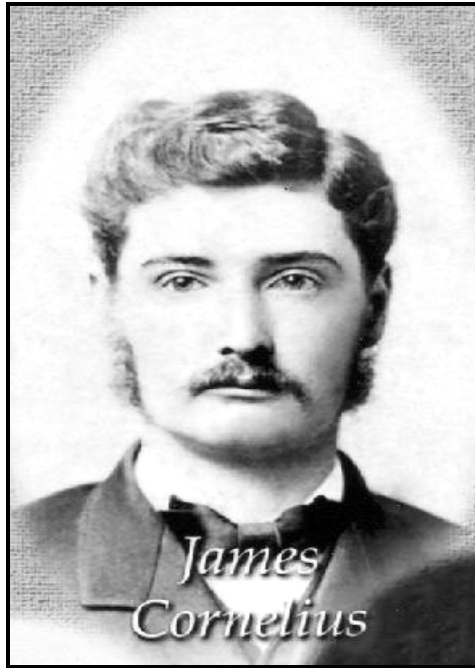
Effie Virginia Ryan, finding fulfillment in her career, family and friends, never married. According to an announcement of her death in 1912 in a Cincinnati newspaper:

Effie had not been in the best of health for some time and in April had traveled to Atlantic City, New Jersey for a ten-day's rest. While visiting in that city, she was taken ill and entered Galan Hall, where she underwent surgery. Her condition grew steadily worse, in spite of all their efforts to help her. Her family was notified of her serious condition and went immediately to Atlantic City. She died on May 25th, 1912, surrounded by her loving family.

Her body was brought back to Cincinnati where a Requiem Mass was chanted at St. Xavier Church, followed by her interment in the family plot at St. Joseph New Cemetery in Delhi, Ohio.



JAMES CORNELIUS RYAN



James Cornelius Ryan, the first son of John B. and Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan, was born on July 11th, 1859, in Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio, and was baptized at St. Xavier Church by Rev. Michael Lawlor, S.J. on July 15th.

He received his education at St. Vincent's Abbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. It appears that shortly after his graduation, he headed west and spent many years there - especially in the Dakotas and Nebraska. While the exact nature of his pursuit is unknown, it is believed they had something to do with writing.

Eventually, James returned home to Cincinnati and lived for a while with his mother and sister, Effie, at their home on Garfield Place. While working in the Engineer's office during the building of the Cincinnati Water Works, he met a beautiful girl named Mary Elizabeth Shilling. Even though he was twenty-one years her senior, he courted and won this lovely lady.

Mary Elizabeth Shilling was born in California Station, Cincinnati, Ohio, on February 29, 1880 and would celebrate few 'real' birthdays, being a leap-year baby. She was the daughter of Bernard and Elizabeth [Eicholt] Schilling.

In a ceremony celebrated on September 5, 1901, at St. James Church in Ludlow, Kentucky, James and Mary Elizabeth were united in Holy Matrimony.

On August 25, 1902 James and Mary Elizabeth became the parents of their first child, Mary Virginia Ryan. But their joy soon turned into heartbreak and sorrow when their infant died 6 days later, on August 31st.

James continued to work in California, Ohio, commuting to and from work each day by train.

James Blakely Ryan, second child and first son of James and Mary Elizabeth, was born on July 17, 1904. Their heartbreak and sorrow were renewed when their newborn son died 9 days later on July 26th.

The couple moved to Dayton in Campbell County, Kentucky, and James went to work as a cashier and bookkeeper for a distillery. It was in their new home that Josepha Aileen Ryan was born on December 15, 1906, and brightened the lives of James and Mary Elizabeth. Called by her middle name, Aileen was baptized at Sacred Heart Church in Bellevue, Kentucky. Her baptismal record indicated the name "Josepha Helene," written in Latin. The Irish translation of Helen is Aileen, and this is the name actually chosen by the parents. However, Aileen later reversed her name explaining:

I never liked the name Josepha, so I used the name Aileen with Josepha as my middle name.

Aileen recorded this interesting piece in her genealogical notes:

There were two births before mine and both had died at home. Father was so eager to have a child, but when she was born he couldn't bear to look at her for fear she, too, would die. So her mother kept her in a basket covered with a shirt. James walked around the covered basket for 3 or 4 days before lifting the cover. Baby Aileen was looking up at him, smiling. From then on he couldn't get enough of her.

Aileen attended Sacred Heart and received a degree in teaching. She taught English, French and History at parochial schools until the depression, when all lay teachers were let go. She took secretarial courses at the Campbell Commercial Business School in Cincinnati, but jobs were few during the depression.

She spent her adult life caring for her widowed mother and working as a secretary at various companies in Cincinnati, Ohio. Aileen died February 16, 2000 at St. Margaret Hall in Cincinnati.

The birth of Joseph Blakely Ryan followed Aileen's two years later. He was born on February 6, 1909 and was baptized at Sacred Heart Church, Bellevue, Kentucky on February 15th.

Known as J. Blakely Ryan, he received his primary education at St. Anthony School. He was an excellent student and received a scholarship to St. Xavier High School. He went on to college, finishing with a degree in Engineering. Following college, "Blake" served in the armed forces. His sister, Aileen, wrote of him:

When Blake was in the service, he was the head (either captain or chief) and when there was a truck that was filled with explosives or dangerous materials, he insisted on driving it. He was a very noble man who didn't want to put any of his men in danger. This was always by his own choice.

At the age of 30, Blake married Miss Alice G. Stapleton of Rosedale, Kentucky. They were married at St. Xavier Church in Cincinnati on October 24, 1939.

They were the parents of 1 child, a daughter they named Aileen Elizabeth, born on June 24th, 1940.

At the age of 55, Alice [Stapleton] Ryan died on September 29, 1969 of congestive heart failure. Following a Requiem Mass, she was buried at St. Joseph Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Blake survived his wife many years, working for Proctor & Gamble as an engineer. The result of a fall caused his death at the age of 80. He died at St. Francis, St. George Hospital on January 13, 1990. Following a Requiem Mass at St. Theresa of Avila Church, Blake was taken to St. Joseph Cemetery and laid to rest next to his wife, Alice.

The fifth child of James Cornelius and Mary [Schilling] Ryan was another son, James Ruffner Ryan, born on March 1, 1911 in Dayton, Campbell County, Kentucky, and baptized at Sacred Heart Church in Bellevue.

He, his brothers and sister, received a good education and all graduated from college. James chose a career with the Federal Aviation Administration, where he served as an air traffic controller.

On June 1, 1944 he married Miss Mary Stanley. The family moved first to West Virginia, where their two children were born; then to Tulsa, Oklahoma, where James eventually retired.

James Ruffner Ryan died on August 30, 1988 and was buried in Tulsa.

The sixth child of James Cornelius and Mary [Shilling] Ryan was born on May 6, 1916 and was given the name John Cornelius Ryan. Their new son was baptized at Sacred Heart Church, Bellevue on May 15, 1916.

Following his education, John chose a career as a Civil Service employee, as did his older brother. He began with the Civil Service Commission before World War II. During the war, he was with the Army Air Corps until 1946. In 1961 he transferred from the C. S. C. to the Internal Revenue Service, where he advanced to become a regional director for personnel.

Following his return from his tour of military duty, John married Jean Mary Buschmiller of Cincinnati. She was the daughter of Joseph and Gertrude [Stegge] Buschmiller and was born on October 27, 1925. They were married at the Nativity of Our Lord Church in Cincinnati, Ohio on August 14, 1948.

John and Jean [Buschmiller] Ryan were the parents of six children; John Joseph, Denis James, Kevin Michael, Kathleen Mary, Robert Ruffner and James Cornelius.

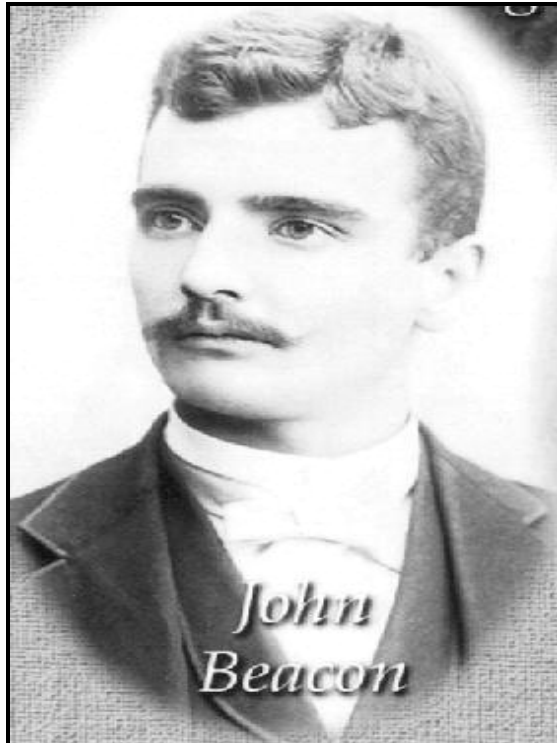
John Cornelius Ryan died March 20, 1999 in Middletown Regional Hospital, at the age of 82, leaving his wife of 50 years, six children and 16 grandchildren to mourn him. Jean [Buschmiller] Ryan would follow her husband in death two years later, on March 25, 2001. They rest for eternity at St. Joseph Cemetery in Cincinnati.

Evarista Virginia Ryan, the last child of James Cornelius and Mary [Schilling] Ryan, was born on May 18, 1919 in Dayton, Kentucky. Obviously named for her Aunt Effie, Evarista was baptized at Sacred Heart Church.

"Effie" died at the tender age of just two years, one month on June 17, 1921, the result of an accidental scalding in bath water. The grieving parents, brothers and sister, followed the little casket to St. Joseph Cemetery in Cincinnati, Ohio.

James Cornelius Ryan died on the 11th of October 1936, at the age of 77 years, 3 months. Following his Mass of Christian Burial, James was buried in a cemetery in Bellevue, Kentucky. His wife, Mary [Schilling] Ryan, survived him twenty years and died on August 23, 1956. Mary was buried at St. Joseph New Cemetery, in Cincinnati, and in December of that year, the body of James Cornelius Ryan was removed to St. Joseph's Cemetery where they rest today side by side.

JOHN BECAN RYAN, JR.



John Becan Ryan, Jr. was born on the 2nd of October, 1863 in Cincinnati, Ohio, the fifth child and second son of John and Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan.

John was educated at St. Vincent's Abbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania in the days of the first Abbot, Boniface Wimmer. John began his high school education just as his older brother was graduating. Following in his brother's footsteps, he headed to the Pacific Coast and worked for newspaper publishing firms in Portland, Seattle, Kansas City and Nebraska.

The following are excerpts taken from the genealogical notes of Aileen Ryan:

While editor of the Omaha Bee, John was voted "best informed man in the City of Omaha." He was a friend of Farney, the painter, with whom he had been associated.

Counted among his friends in Cincinnati were Duveneck and Barnhorn. He made his home at the old Dennison Hotel, with Tom" his pet canary. He is remembered as a very genial, gentle, loving soul who knew well how to give pleasure to others. John never married, and died on March 27th, 1919.

His obituary best tells the story of his life.

**JOHN BECAN RYAN, NEWSPAPER FIGURE,
TAKEN BY DEATH**

John Becan Ryan, for many years identified with the newspapers of Cincinnati, died yesterday after an illness extending over several months. The funeral will take place tomorrow from the home of his brother, James C. Ryan, 225 Sixth Ave., Dayton, Ky., with Requiem High Mass at 9 o'clock at St. Xavier Church, this city. [Cincinnati]. Mr. Ryan came of one of the pioneer families of Cincinnati and was born in this city. After leaving college, went west and successfully engaged in newspaper work on the Pacific coast. He returned to this city about 12 years ago and identified himself with local papers, his last connection being with the Commercial Tribune, where he was local night editor.

After an accident involving an injury to his spine several years ago, his health began to decline, and last September he retired from active work.

He was a brother of Miss Effie Ryan, who for years was prominently identified with educational interests in Cincinnati.

Mr. Ryan was a well-informed and scholarly man, and because of his genial disposition and the fatherly interest he took in new recruits in the newspaper business, was affectionately called "Father Ryan". He was a tireless worker, and last year compiled for the Cincinnati Directory an immense amount of valuable information, especially pertaining to the war. For years he resided at the old Dennison Hotel, which he regarded as his home. Here he lived, his only companion being 'Tom Nolan Ryan', his pet canary. When he purchased his quota of the last Liberty Loan, he bought two bonds in the name of his bird. Mr. Ryan is survived by his brother, James C. and a sister, a member of the Sacred Heart order of nuns in Clifton.

There is little to add. He chose a home-life of solitude, shared only with his pet canary. John was very content with his life, career and friends.

JOSEPHA AILEEN RYAN



On April 7, 1867 John and Mary Louise [Blakely] Ryan added another child to their growing family. The eighth child and fifth daughter, Josepha Aileen Ryan was baptized at St. Xavier Church in Cincinnati on the 8th of April, 1867, her certificate reading "Josepha Helene." Aileen is the Irish version of Helen. Her sponsors were her aunt and uncle, Lavinia and Sebastian Wimmer of St. Marys, Pennsylvania.

When it came time for Josepha to attend school, she went to the Annunciation Convent School in Kearney, Nebraska where her sisters had been schooled before her. When she entered her high school years, she transferred to the Visitation Academy in Washington, D. C. where her older sister was the music teacher. She excelled in her studies as the following excerpt from an article that appeared in the Evening Post in Cincinnati:

CINCINNATI GENIUS

Miss Josepha A. Ryan Takes Five Gold Medals in a Washington Academy

WASHINGTON, DC, June 25, 1885 (U.P.) Miss Cleveland, accompanied by Miss Nelson of Madison Ave., yesterday attended the distribution exercises of the Academy of the Visitation, Georgetown, and herself placed the floral crowns on the heads of the young lady graduates, who are four in number: Miss Kate Garlaner, of Alabama; Lessie Horibrook, of Arkansas; Minnie McMahon, of North Carolina and Louise Cole, of Tennessee; also crowning the eight gold medal pupils of the incoming senior class. Of these Miss Josepha A. Ryan, of Cincinnati, received the unexampled number of five gold medals, besides several premiums.

WHO IS MISS RYAN, 18?

Miss Ryan is a beautiful brunette of 18, the daughter of the late John B. Ryan, of Cincinnati, and Mrs. Mary L. Ryan, of the Public Library, whose residence is 98 W. 7th Street. ...

Miss Josephas' studies have taken a very wide range, but in every branch she has attained unusual proficiency and won many awards of merit. At the close of her first year at Georgetown, she took the gold medal in the study of Christian doctrine, and at that time developed an unusual fondness for theology. Her second and third years were marked by the acquirement of silver medals in mathematics, and numerous premiums, while this year the success which has rewarded her studies is such as to afford a topic for telegraphic comment.

Miss Ryan learns easily, but nevertheless has the reputation of being as much a plodder as though every fact were acquired and retained only by the severest application. Her academic training has embraced theology, history, philosophy, mathematics, chemistry, and the classics, beside a thorough course in English language and literature. Her vacations are passed at home, in constant study, and she has found time, amid her scholastic researches, to partially develop a musical talent of more than ordinary strength.

It was somewhat of a disappointment to her that the President of the United States did not distribute the senior honors on this occasion, as he has in former years, but President Cleveland some weeks ago notified the preceptress of the academy that he could not spare the time to be present at this pleasing ceremonial, so that the young ladies were obliged to be content with a substitute.

Josepha graduated from the Visitation Academy the following June 1886. She attended college, though which one is unknown. Following her graduation, she

embarked on a teaching career and made that her lifetime commitment. She chose to concentrate on her instruction of the young, family and friends, forsaking marriage and children. She suffered from dementia in her later years, and what a struggle that must have been for her.

On February 15, 1950, at the age of 84, Josepha Aileen Ryan died. Following her Requiem Mass, her family and a host of friends carried Josepha Aileen Ryan to St. Joseph New Cemetery. She was buried in the Ryan family plot.

BEATRICE GRACE RYAN



Beatrice Grace Ryan was born in 1869. The exact date of her birth is unknown. She died of tuberculosis at the age of 18 on September 28, 1887.

This account was written regarding her life and death:

On last Monday morning the last rites of the Church were performed at St. Xavier's over the remains of Beatrice Grace, youngest child of Mary L. and the late John B. Ryan, both well known and respected in our community. Beatrice Grace died on Wednesday evening, the 28th instant, in her 18th year, after an illness of several months duration, with rapid consumption. All that the unbounded love of an affectionate mother and devoted brothers and sisters could suggest, was done for her, but the hand of death could not be stayed. It seemed that this flower of unsullied purity was too fair to thrive in the

tainted atmosphere of this world and was, therefore, transplanted by God's will to bloom eternally in Heaven.

Rev. Dr. Moeller, who for years was her spiritual director, chanted the Requiem Mass, assisted at the close by the Rev. Fathers Ward and Chambers, S.J.

As the procession entered the church, Mr. T. J. Sullivan sang “Flee as a Bird”.

At the close of the service the Rev. Dr. Moeller preached a sermon, whose beauty and appropriateness touched a responsive chord in every breast. No one was better fitted to speak of the transcendent beauty of her soul, and of the saintly life which she had led; a mere child in years, yet so mature in virtuous perfection.

It may seem untimely that she should thus be called away, in the very dawn of her day, but not to those of Christian spirit, who appreciate fully the ecstatic bliss that awaits all who have lived and died as she has. In this reflection upon her life and death, the members of her family who were so dear to her, and who were ever the objects of her tenderest solicitude, may well find a source of consolation, if not happiness.

The remains were placed in a vault at St. Joseph's Cemetery, there to await final interment.

So now you have read the story of Mary Louise, the third child of James and Susanna [Smyth] Blakely, as well as those of her husband and children. Her direct descendants can and should be very proud of her.

SUSANNA XAVIER BLAKELY



**Daguerreotype
Believed to be
Susanna Xavier Blakely**

Susanna Xavier Blakely, the fifth child born to James and Susanna Blakely, arrived on a cold, wintry day, the 23rd of February in 1837. On the 5th of March, she was baptized at St. Paul's Cathedral with Laurence Mitchel and Ophelia Zimonds as her sponsors.

When Sue was about 6 years old, she began her education at the Visitation Academy of Mount DeChantal, in Wheeling, West Virginia. She showed herself an exceptionally bright pupil, talented and studious. She continued attending the academy until her graduation. On being graduated from that institution she carried off the highest honors of her class. Faithful in her friendship, she kept up a correspondence with many of her old schoolmates during her lifetime.

On completion of her studies, she returned to her parents' home in Pittsburgh, and in 1862 she moved with them to a house on Center Street in St. Mary, Pennsylvania.

Her talents were of an unusually high order. She was a fine linguist, as her translations from the different languages attest, and her stories and poems in the different magazines gained the admiration of all who read them. Her writings were devotional and inspirational and reflected her deep love for her God and His Church.

Susanna Blakely was a fervent Catholic, and might be called a pioneer member of the Sacred Heart Church in St. Mary, which was built in 1876. Loving the beauty of

this house of the Lord, she took delight in caring for the altar and in beautifying the sanctuary. She attended to the altar linens, cared for the vestments of her parish priest, and brought fresh flowers to adorn the high altar.

Sue X., as some referred to her, remained at home with her parents, James and Susanna, caring for them in their declining years. After the death of her parents, Sue gave up the house they had shared on Center Street, and moved in with her sister and brother-in-law, Lavinia and Sebastian Wimmer, who lived just a block away.

In late December or early in the year 1901, Sue was stricken with "incipient paralysis," supposedly the result of a fall. Even though her physician's skill and care was unrelenting, her condition did not improve. It was thought that special treatment in a hospital would be of benefit to her, so she traveled to Erie, Pennsylvania and entered St. Vincent's Hospital there. She tolerated the journey well and for a few days seemed to improve. Her sister-in-law, Mary [Gensheimer] Blakely, lived in Erie and attended her daily, as did the devoted Sisters of the hospital. In spite of the prayers, and efforts of her physicians, Susanna Xavier Blakely died May 17, 1901.

Her remains were brought back to St. Mary, accompanied by her brother, Father Aloysius, and Mary Blakely with her son, Eugene. They were taken to the home of her sister and brother-in-law, Lavinia and Sebastian Wimmer, where friends and visitors called to pay their last respects.

Although she had lovingly cared for the altar and sacristy of Sacred Heart Church, her Requiem Mass was said on May 20th in "the German Church," the Church of St. Mary. Her brother, Joseph [Father Aloysius] chanted Mass with several priests assisting. Following the service, the funeral procession proceeded to St. Mary Catholic Cemetery where Sue was laid to rest in the Wimmer lot, even though her parents were buried in the Blakely lot just across the road.⁵

Sebastian explains it this way in his 1901 diary:

Saturday, May 18 - After 7½ p.m. Eugene and I called on Fr. Prior for order to Mr. Dippolt to dig the grave for Sue's remains, and delivered same to his house. He was out, so we had to hunt him up. He finally called at our house and we came to the conclusion to bury her in our lot instead of Blakely's, owing to the fact that there was barely space enough there, besides being now so wet and rocky.

⁵ Ed. note: Sue Xavier is the only Blakely that can still be identified in St. Mary Cemetery. There is no record of James and Susanna as their headstones vanished, and the lot was sold to the Luhr family.

William James Blakely

William James Blakely, the sixth child and first son of James and Susanna [Smyth] Blakely, joined this full house on the 26 of April 1839. James Cochran and Catherine McCauley [his maternal aunt and her husband] were the sponsors when he was presented at St. Paul's Cathedral for baptism on the 5th of May 1839.

William began his education at St. Vincent's in Latrobe Pennsylvania. He later attended St. Francis School in Loretto Pennsylvania, where he studied for two years, taking preparatory classes. He then transferred to Georgetown College in Washington D. C. Where, after six more years of classical and scientific studies, he graduated in 1858 with the highest honors of his class. Choosing the profession of medicine, he took a three-year course of study at the Medical Institute of Homeopathy and the Homeopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia, and he received degrees in medicine, obstetrics and surgery.

To quote from *A History of Allegheny County*:

Dr. William J. Blakely, a native of Pittsburgh and student of Dr. J. P. Dake, graduated at the Homeopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania, in the class of 1861.

He lived in Pittsburgh for a short time before he moved to St. Marys in Elk County where he was a surgeon working for a section of the Philadelphia & Erie Railway. While living in St. Marys, Dr. Blakely met the amiable and accomplished Josephine Luhr, daughter of Joseph and Barbara [Loesch] Luhr.

Dr. Blakely and Josephine Luhr were married on May 10, 1864 in St. Marys, but only ten short months later, Josephine died in childbirth on March 13, 1865. The grief stricken husband buried his new bride and their stillborn son, whom they named John Becan Blakely, on the Blakely family lot in St. Marys Catholic Cemetery.

In the years following the loss of his wife and son, Dr. Blakely met Mary Gensheimer of Erie Pennsylvania. By 1870, Dr. Blakely left St. Marys and moved his practice to Erie, where he and Mary Gensheimer were married on August 25, 1870. Dr. William and Mary [Gensheimer] Blakely welcomed into their hearts and lives four children; Eugene, Josephine, Susan and James A. Blakely.

On January 7, 1877, Dr. William James Blakely died suddenly from pneumonia contracted from one of his patients. He left a grieving widow with four very young children, ranging in age from six to newborn (perhaps just months old).

The newspaper accounts of his untimely death are many and lengthy. The following is part of the eulogy, delivered by Father Casey, as quoted in the Erie newspaper:

We are assembled here today, kind friends, to pay the last sad tribute to the memory of one who was well known and highly respected in this community. Persons of all classes are here. The non-Catholic is present because in the person of the deceased, during life, he recognized all those qualities of heart and of mind that united, makes the gentlemen of sterling worth. By all such, he was known as a member of his profession, gifted with an ability more than ordinary, possessed of an honor and an integrity far beyond reproach. They mayhap had frequently met him in the performance of his professional duties, and had learned to regard him as a physician most anxious to advance the interests of the school to which he belonged, and ever ready and willing to assist his fellow man, no matter what creed or color; hence throwing all religious feeling aside, they manifest by their presence today, that the deceased, although a devoted Catholic, had won for himself many true and warm-hearted friends amongst those who are strangers to his cherished faith.

The Catholic and particularly members of this congregation are here to perform a most sacred duty. They are here for a higher, holier purpose. They have been taught that all ends not with death, that no matter how well the life may have been led, there perhaps may have been some fault unatoned for, since they know that God in His all-wise judgment is scrupulously just and exacting; hence they are here for the purpose of uniting with the priest at the altar in asking God to forgive whatever may have been amiss in the life of the deceased.

He was one who not only practiced his religion, but understood it well, and as well, knew how to defend it. Were any of its principals attacked, any of its sacred institutions slandered, the hand that is now stilled in death was ready and willing to use the pen in their defense, and the tongue that is now hushed in the keep silence of the grave, often uttered words that bore with them conviction, because they proceeded from a heart sincerely honest. In a literary point of view, the deceased was a man of no mean ability. Of a studious turn of mind, he kept himself well posted not only on new developments that might be made in the science of medicine, but on all topics of interest, whether civil or religious. His highest ambition appeared to have been to diffuse around him as far as he could, that knowledge which he himself possessed, and hence we find him interested in associations of a literary character, and today one of these societies, the Young Men's Catholic Lyceum, have turned out in body to do honor to him whom a few days ago unanimously chose to be their president.

As a father, the Doctor was kind; as a husband, gentle; as a member of society, not only exemplary but a model. Some years ago it was a pleasant duty for me to address a few words of encouragement to the deceased. I congratulated him upon the happy event, which then took place. I told him his future looked bright and happy. These words may have been true, but how short that future was. And she who today is dressed in the habiliments of grief, mourning a sad and irreparable loss, and towards whom the sympathies of the entire community are now extended, stood by his side on the auspicious occasion, decked in the gay attire of a bride, happy in the consciousness of being the possessor of a rich treasury, viz-a-vie the love of a true and devoted husband; but she too belongs to the same faith which he so edifyingly practiced and strongly defended, and her duty, as that faith teaches, is to bow in meek submission to the holy will of Him 'who doeth all things well'. To the father and mother, brothers and sisters of the deceased, I can say that this sad event is one, which excites the sympathies of the entire community. In your sorrow you are not alone, for the poor who received assistance from him whom you mourn, feel that they have lost a benefactor and a friend. Let it be a consolation to you to know that he died fortified with the sacraments, that his death was such as might have been expected after a good life, a peaceful and happy one; and let this thought dissipate the heavy cloud which now hangs over you, that your loss is his eternal gain.

Mary raised her family, with the help of her loving parents. It seems that she survived her husband by many years although her date of death is unknown.

Perhaps one day an heir of one of the four children of Dr. William James and Mary [Gensheimer] Blakely will be located and the story of each of them will be revealed.

LAURIE JOHN BLAKELY



Circa 1858

John Laurence Blakely,⁶ the seventh child and second son of James and Susanna [Smyth] Blakely, was born on March 4, 1843 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.⁷

The baptismal records, from St. Paul's Cathedral, Diocese of Pittsburgh, show this infant was baptized "John Laurence" on March 12, 1843, and his names honored his uncles, John Simpson Blakely and Laurence Mitchel.

He lived with his parents and siblings at "Hillside Home" in the Lawrenceville area of Pittsburgh until it was time to begin his formal education. He, as did all the boys, went away to school, first attending the school in Loretto, then going off to St. Vincent's College in Latrobe.

In the 1860 census of Pittsburgh, Laurie appeared as 'living at home' and his occupation is given as 'clerk'. Probably he was working in the office of his uncle, Laurence Michel, beginning his studies of the law.

In 1862 just as the Civil War was beginning and after his father had lost everything to bankruptcy, the Blakely family moved to St. Marys, in Elk County Pennsylvania, and Laurie traveled to Cincinnati Ohio, where he went into business as a notary and phonographer, with an office at 53 West Third Street and his residence at 221 Broadway. He appeared again, in the 1863 *Williams City Directory*, listed only as a notary working at the same location, but had moved his residence to 333 West Sixth Street.⁸

⁶ Later in life he would call himself Laury John or L.J. Blakely

⁷ He told his family that he was born in Brooke County Virginia, but all evidence supports his birth being in Pittsburgh.

⁸ These could have been boarding houses.

In 1864 he disappeared from the Cincinnati city directory, but in May of 1864 Laurie was a witness at the wedding of his brother, Dr. William Blakely, in St. Marys.

While the war between the states was raging in 1864, Laurie Blakely appeared a total of nine times in the diaries of his uncle, Sebastian Wimmer with dates ranging from February 20th to December 30th, covering the entire year.⁹

In 1865, at the close of the war, Laurie is again mentioned in the Wimmer diary, but only once. On February 27th, Sebastian Wimmer traveled to New York "in the company of Laurie as far as Philadelphia." The conclusion seems to be that Laurie John Blakely did not serve in the Civil War.

In the 1870 census of Elk County, Laurie Blakely is living with his parents and sister, Sue X., his age given as 24 and his occupation as lawyer. Not long after this census was taken, Laurie decided it was time that he take leave of his family and strike out on his own. He headed to Louisville, Kentucky where he made the acquaintance of some well-known gentlemen. It was through the influence of his good friend, Mr. Halstead that Laurie left Louisville and went to Covington, Kentucky. He was appointed Clerk of the Court of Bankruptcy when Major Richardson was Registrar of the State.

It was later written of this association:

Major Richardson and Mr. Blakely were members of the famous 'Curb Stone Club', and what rare stories were told by the Banquet Board! Judge James O'Hara, William Arthur, Lee Baker, John G. Carlisle and later, the gifted Hallam, who said that Kentucky lost much by not locking the Major and Blakely in a room and having a stenographer take down their chat of old times and feuds in Kentucky.

Laurie Blakely remained a bachelor until he was thirty-four years old. But then, the confirmed bachelor met the lovely Lilly. Lilly Hudson Lendrum, daughter of John Buckner Lendrum and Elizabeth Hudson Rudd, was born on September 13, 1852 in Covington Kentucky where her father was the City Clerk.

Laurie John and Lilly Lendrum married on the 28th of June 1877 at the home of her parents on Scott Street in Covington.¹⁰ The ceremony was performed by Father Tom Major, once a member of "Morgan's Raiders" during the war between the states and assisted by Mr. W. H. Felix, a Baptist Minister Following the ceremony,

⁹ Family stories recount that he joined the Confederacy toward the end of the war; however, no evidence of that has been found.

¹⁰ . Laurie was from a very staunch Catholic family, but Lilly was Baptist, so the marriage ceremony could not take place in the church.

the newly-weds went to *The Greenbrier* in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia.

They set up housekeeping in the Covington area and Lilly remained at home while Laurie still practiced law, but began to dabble in journalism. They were blessed with their first child, Stephens, ten months later. But Lilly's happiness was overshadowed by the sudden death of her father, John Lendrum, the following month on May 25, 1878.

Stephens Laurie Blakely¹¹ was born on April 23, 1878, followed by their second child, Paul Lendrum on February 29th, 1880. Again, the joys of welcoming another child into their hearts and home were clouded when her mother, Elizabeth [Rudd] Lendrum died on March 15, 1880 only two weeks after Paul's birth.

The young couple recovered from the loss of her parents and the birth of two children (all in a short span of two years) and life grew brighter as Laurie and Lilly welcomed their daughters, Elizabeth Ashton, born in 1883, Susan Haughton in 1885, and Mary Louise in 1886, followed by another son, Laurie Aloysius in 1894, thus completing their family.

Sometime during the following few years, Laurie Blakely changed his profession, setting aside the robes of law and taking up the pen of journalism. A newspaper article said:

Mr. Blakely was a master of his tongue. He wrote with the exquisite simplicity of Addison and the tenderness of Dickens." He was acquainted with Mark Twain, and I'm sure his writing was encouraged by this well-known author.

Many of the columns, prose and poetry of Laurie Blakely have survived the ages, though carelessly glued into scrapbooks. This poem was probably written for his children when they were young:

RHYME OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Flossy curls in the trundle bed,
Kissed good night and little prayers said.
Christmas Eve, and the wind so cold
And the sky was covered in blue and gold.

The children, as good as good can be,
Hung up their stockings in merry glee;
And they said, in the winters long ago,
When the fields were covered with pretty snow,
The Christ-child came in the stable cold;
And then with their pretty lips they told

¹¹ Stephens was named for Laurie Blakely's best friend who was Napoleon Stephens.

**How angels sang in the joyful sky,
"Glory to God, forever on high".**

**How the shepherds heard, as in the field
They watched their flocks, and the oxen kneeled,
When the Christ-child came in the winter cold,
And the sky was wrapped in blue and gold.**

**Bye and bye, as the hours passed,
And the moon on the snow strange shadows cast,
The bright eyes closed and heads of floss
Were dreaming of dear old Santa Claus.**

**Blessings tonight on each curly head
Tucked away in a trundle bed!
Happy the dreams their fancies weave
When the Christ-child comes on Christmas Eve.
And this be the rhyme of the Christmas tree,
"The Christ-child's love from Galilee."**



**The family of Lilly and Laurie Blakely c. 1901
Seated, l. to r., Paul, Lilly, Laurie jr., Laurie, and Susan
Standing: Elizabeth, Stephens, and Mary Louise**

In 1912, Laurie J. Blakely was named Dean of the newly founded School of Journalism at St. Xavier College (now Xavier University) in Cincinnati.

It is best explained by quoting the Rev. F. Heiermann, S. J.:

It was only after arriving in Cincinnati in 1911 that I became acquainted with Mr. Blakely. I could not help admiring his staunch character, his extensive learning, and correct judgment on all questions of the day. It was thought desirable to have him connected with the college. The St. Xavier College of Commerce, Accounts and Finance was auspiciously opened in 1911.

In 1912 the College of Journalism was added, and Mr. Blakely was put in charge of the new department. The course in journalism was to be an alternate for accounting, and the degree work was to include the entire program of ethics, economics and business law of the College of Commerce. The faculty agreed with Mr. Blakely in this; that the professional journalist, and in fact all those who want to be practically acquainted with the work of this profession, must be thoroughly informed on correct principles of economics, law and the fact of history, both political and cultural, domestic and foreign, if the profession should wield its influence for the real and highest interests of mankind.

Of this ideal Mr. Blakely was convinced. To hold up such an ideal in theory and practice before the students, Mr. Blakely was fully equipped. With his vast experience and a newspaper writer in several large cities, connected by ties of friendship with prominent editors, he combined a mastery of clear, forceful and convincing style, which made his thoughts and principles stand out in bold relief and carry conviction to the minds of the readers. Mild irony, wit and humor entered his literary composition and lectures as welcome and spicy ingredients. Much of what he wrote was of permanent value and deserves to be published.

While fulfilling his duties as the dean of journalism, he continued to work as an editor at the *Commercial Tribune* in Covington, traveling back and forth across the Ohio River.

Father Francis Finn, S. J. recalled this incident, which does fairly describe Laurie J. Blakely:

On an intensely warm evening in mid-June, some years ago, I was one of a large audience, assembled in the Emery Auditorium for the

commencement exercises of St. Xavier College. Presently there was a solemn procession, and the stage became a thing of caps and gowns. Very soon, all eyes were fixed upon one figure in the imposing assembly. He was the Macgregor of the crowd. No matter where he was, that was the place of prominence. Academic dress could not lessen his individuality. A man of long, white hair, flowing mustache, a brilliant eye, striking features, cheeks that the rose might envy, all combined to present a typical southern gentleman. "Who is he?" came the question from the uninitiated. "Why, that's Laurie J. Blakely" was the answer. True to appearance and true to type, Laurie J. Blakely was every inch a gentleman, a Southerner, and what concerns us most, every inch a Catholic.



On January 21, 1917 the pen was stilled and the tongue, silenced. The death of Laurie Blakely was reported with these beautiful words:

When the Editor of the Universe gave his last assignment to Blakely, when his 'copy was all in', Kentucky lost a man whose place can never be filled.

Another wrote:

He had the heart of a poet and the tenderness of a woman. He gave of the best that was in him and in the lavish giving of mental power he lost in the fight. It was during the last cold spell an incident occurred-small in itself-yet a true index of the man's greatness of soul. The streets were crowded, night was approaching, a small newsboy had slipped on the ice; he looked wistfully towards the opposite side of

the street. Along came Blakely, his familiar bag of copy held in his hand, his soft hat well over his shock of snowy hair. He picked the little fellow up and 'set him across', as the Cumberland folk would express it.

His funeral Mass was said at St. Marys Cathedral, in Covington, attended by his grieving widow, his children, family and a host of friends. He was laid to rest in St. Marys Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell Kentucky in the Blakely plot.

Lilly Hudson Lendrum



Lilly Hudson [Lendrum] Blakely

Lilly survived her husband five years, spending her last years in the home of her daughter, Mary Louise Baldwin in Chicago Illinois, where she died on April 22, 1922 a few months before her 70th birthday. She had embraced the Catholic Church some years prior to her death. She was brought back to Kentucky, where her Requiem Mass was celebrated at the Cathedral, and she was buried in the Blakely plot in Ft. Mitchell next to her husband of 40 years.



**The children of Laurie and Lilly Blakely
l. to r.
Laurie, Jr., Mary Louise, Elizabeth, Stephens, Paul and Susan**

Picture taken at "Cardome" c. 1940

STEPHENS LAURIE BLAKELY



Stephens Laurie Blakely, the first child of Laurie and Lilly [Lendrum] Blakely, was born in Covington, Kentucky April 23, 1878. He was baptized at St. Mary's Cathedral in Covington, Kentucky.

In the Blakely family bible, a gift to Laurie and Lilly Blakely on their wedding day, Laurie made the following entry:

Laurie John Stephens Blakely (and called 'Stephens' in honor of an old and dear friend, N. B. Stephens) was born in Covington Ky. on the 23rd of April 1878 - Baptized by the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Covington, KY. His godfather being Very Rev. E. H. Brandt, V. G. His godmother, Effie Virginia Ryan, our niece. Born at No. 609 Scott Street.

Called Stephens to "honor an old friend," his middle name became Laurie to honor his father. N. B. Stephens, by the way, was Napoleon B. Stephens, Clerk of the Kenton County Circuit Court in Covington, Kentucky.

Stephens received his early education at La Sallette Academy in Covington, and his high school education at St. Xavier, across the river in Cincinnati, Ohio. He studied the required history, sciences, Latin, Greek and the philosophers. In 1894, at the age of 16, he began his studies at St. Xavier College in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Many of Stephens' early compositions and writings have been preserved and are interesting and imaginative. For example, he wrote this composition for a humanities class on March 8, 1895 when he was only 17 years old:

The Meeting in the Graveyard

Stephens L. Blakely

I am a traveler, a vagabond, a cosmopolitan, a swain of no nation. I wander over the whole earth and I write. In my travels I have had many strange adventures, but none equal the one, which I now relate.

One day, about three years ago while walking in the country, I saw a funeral procession, and, having nothing better to do, I followed it. When I arrived at the graveyard, not wishing to witness the funeral ceremonies, I decided to take a walk about the grounds. Slowly I strolled off with my hands behind my back. I walked for perhaps a mile, and being tired, I threw myself upon the grass beneath a weeping willow; pulling my hat over my eyes, I began to doze, to sleep.

I awoke with a start; it was night. I gazed around, then I recollected where I was. I confess I was nervous, I was disconcerted. "But then," I thought, "what is a graveyard? It is a resting place, where we all must lie, and should I be unwilling to abide a while with my sometime companions!" I tried to laugh but I could not. All was so still and dark and so inexpressly solemn that a laugh seemed a desecration.

"I must find my way out of here," I thought. I walked along the gravel road for some time but did not seem to be getting any nearer to the gate. I sat down upon a bench to ponder; I began to think; I began to get nervous. Hark! What was that? Surely I heard a footstep - but I saw nothing save the white tombstones and the black trees. I started up but before I had gone many steps, I again heard the footsteps and this time I was not mistaken. I peered into the darkness before me and behold! I was the dim figure of a man robed in a long black gown. He approached me and in a deep, guttural tone said "I am ready." To my utter astonishment, he took me by the arm and walked rapidly down the road. He said not a word and neither did I.

He had evidently been expecting someone else, and had mistaken me for him. However, I was determined to play the game out and see what came of it. Moreover, I was anxious to escape from the cemetery. We went out by a side gate and then across a field to a miserable hut. He entered and I followed him. The interior was most meanly furnished and the whole appearance of the apartment betrayed abject poverty. In the center of the room was a rough pine table covered with charts, pictures and other things, which I did not comprehend. I now observed my host; he was tall and erect. His head was crowned with long black hair, his eyes, large and lustrous, frowned beneath his shaggy brows. A flowing black beard covered his breast. He motioned me to a chair. I seated myself and he did the same. He opened a book written in Black Letter and after reading for a few minutes he made upon a piece of paper a great many zeros. After working with them and covering several pages of paper he produced a diagram.

"Rejoice!," he cried. "The time has come the lost shall be found, and riches shall be increased. The long years we have spent in poverty are not lost. Do as I have told you and you shall be among the great ones of the earth. And now, go forth; remain and be prepared."

I was thunder struck; never had I heard of happenings like these. Taking up a space and wrapping his cloak around him, he disappeared into the gloom. When I had recovered from my amazement I opened the door and fled, nor did I stop until the dawn was breaking. Then I found the road and retraced my steps to the city. When I arrived there I walked directly to my hotel and went to bed. When I awoke it was in the afternoon. I pondered over my strange adventure and half persuaded myself that it was a dream. But no; there were my clothes, all torn and dusty.

To be sure, I decided to visit the country again and see if there were any traces of my night's adventure. After dinner I started out. I arrived at the graveyard, found the side gate, and began my search. But there was not a single trace of the hut anywhere; on inquiring, I was informed that there had never been a hut in that vicinity. I was now certain of the fact that I had dreamt, but the state of my clothes was inexplicable.

Two years after, while walking in Paris with a friend, I was accosted by a tall, fine looking man on horseback. "Who is that?," I asked. "Why, don't you know? He is immensely wealthy, but no one seems to know him; some say he is Egyptian." Suddenly a thought flashed across my mind. The gentleman on horseback; was it he whom I had met in the graveyard?

Strange, was it not?

He wrote papers about St. Joan of Arc and St. Thomas in Mexico. He wrote another titled *Resolved: That Gunpowder Has Lessened the Mortality of Modern Warfare*. He wrote several short stories, including *Study in Mental Science*, *Old Uncle Jakes' Silver Cup*, *A Remarkable Coincidence*, *A Mountain Romance* and *The Failure of Mr. Greyson*.

His son, John R. Blakely fondly recalled:

It was while in college that his regard for constitutional law first asserted itself. He coupled his interest with a talent for clear expression of thought, and by the time he was just 20 years old, he had written several articles on the Constitution and recognized it as an instrument of freedom. He was devoted to the liberty of the individual; freedom of thought and expression, and the independence granted to him by natural law.

Stephens graduated from St. Xavier College [now known as Xavier University] on June 29, 1898 and in August of that year, went to work in the law offices of Mr. Finnell in Covington.

He kept a daily diary during his final months in college and continued to do so throughout his life, most of which have survived the numerous 'house-cleanings' of the attic at his home, "Beechwood," and which are now stored in the family archives by his grandson, Stephens Blakely Woodrough and his wife, Margaret [Margot] Vollmer Woodrough.

By 1900, Stephens ("Steve") had joined the Kentucky Militia and was stationed in the State Capitol at Frankfort during the upheaval following the assassination of Governor William Goebel, within months of his appointment. The Kentucky General Assembly had declared the election of William Taylor unconstitutional and appointed William Goebel. Two men by the name of Devis and Powers were arrested and put on trial for the assassination of Goebel. The town boiled with supporters as well as opponents, and tensions ran high. Steve's diary on March 21, 1900 contains this entry:

Weather cold and clear. It is reported that the mountaineers will be in town Friday at the trial of Devis and Powers. Kentucky is in a fearful condition but she is merely the mouth of the volcano which slumbers beneath the entire country. There is Finley in Pennsylvania and Clarke in Montana. The people in these states submit patiently to wrong but Kentuckians do not. Kentucky may lead the general uprising against fraud and political corruption. The battle of the two rival military organizations at Frankfort will not end the contest, though every man should die. It seems to me that there is no remedy save a return to the principles of Democracy expressed in the Kentucky resolutions! The evil ----lencies of centralization have been fully demonstrated since the War Between the States. The advocates of a strong central government have had ample opportunity to put their beliefs into practice and what is the result? In the first place there is universal corruption. Politician is become an opportunists epithet. We no longer are Calhoun arguing with Webster upon the theory and spirit of our government. Political economy has no acquaintance with our modern office seekers. Theres a tendency towards fraternalism especially on the part of the Federal Government. We have a Federal bankruptcy law recently passed. We hear of Federal ownership of railroads, and telegraphs of Federal control of the militia, of Federal election laws, of Federal marriage and divorce laws, Federal quarantine laws, and in fact so universal has this idea of Federal Supremacy become, the 'states rights' has almost lost the meaning it had with the founders of the Constitution. This is a constitution 'for the United States' and 'all powers, not delegated, are reserved to the state or to the people'. The state, that is an organized body of individuals, is the source of original power. It is sovereign; it has delegated certain powers to a Federal agent which

powers may be reserved, as they have not been given up, but merely entrusted. This may be heresy at the present time, but as Gallileo is reported to have said 'It does move, though.' The theory of local self-government is sound and is supported, in every particular, by the Constitution and history. No one has ever been able to prove the contrary. The Goebel election law is the outcome of this spirit of imperialism, and until it is effaced and we return to the purity of our former ideas of government, 'there can be no peace in England.'

Stephens, age 22 when he was with the militia in Frankfort, received mail and packages from home, but not from the one woman he wished to hear from the most. He wrote the following missive in his diary on February 28th, 1900:

I haven't received a letter from Jane since I have been here. I cannot imagine what the trouble is. We parted on good terms and I certainly have never offended her and would not for anything. I can only wait with a certain degree of curiosity to know why she has acted in this manner." The lady in question was the 18-year-old sister of his best friend, Wykoff Piatt. On March 14th, he muses again, "I wish I could hear from Jane. I cannot understand her long silence.

The lady in question was Jane Piatt, who was the 18-year-old sister of his best friend, Wykoff Piatt. Two weeks later on March 14th, he muses: "I wish I could hear from Jane. I cannot understand her long silence." But good news finally came on March 26th: "Got a letter from Josie, and best of all, one from Jane - a long one."

Steve was admitted to the bar on March 26, 1901. The following article appeared in the local newspaper:

BARRISTER BLAKELY
Admission to Bar After Very Creditable Examination

Stephens L. Blakely was publicly examined in the Circuit Court room yesterday touching his knowledge of law and practice, preparatory to his admission to the bar, and so ably answered the intricate questions propounded by the examiners, Hon. Harvey Myers and M. H. McLean, as to receive from Judge Tarvin high praise and prompt granting of a certificate. The young disciple of Blackstone took the requisite oath and was duly enrolled a member of the bar. He will join with attorney Hollen in partnership, and the firm will be Hollen & Blakely.

When Steve returned from his service with the Kentucky Militia in 1903 he resumed his law practice. He, also, continued his study of law and enrolled at the old McDonald Institute, now known as Chase Law School, in Cincinnati, Ohio. He completed these studies in April 1905.

The friendship between Steve and Jane continued through these years, but Steve by no means concentrated on Jane. His diary records “calling on” many lady acquaintances and even mentions one particular lady friend who seemed infatuated with the handsome young attorney, but he was not inclined to express mutual feelings of admiration.

On May 9, 1905 Steve gathered up his courage and openly professed his love for Jane by asking her to marry him. He confessed in his diary that he had loved only her for nearly six years while she candidly professed to him that she had secretly loved him for more than two years prior to his proposal. His best friend and Jane’s brother, Wykoff Piatt, was somewhat offended when he heard the news, feeling that Steve should have asked him for permission to marry his sister before his proposal. The close bond that had been forged since childhood between Wyk and Steve was damaged, but only temporarily. They both resumed their mutual trust in each other and their strong friendship.

Stephens Laurie Blakely and Jane DeValcourt Stamps Piatt, the daughter of Edward Courtney and Sallie Scott [Richardson] Piatt, were married at St. Mary's Cathedral in Covington on June 6, 1906, attended by a host of family, friends and associates. Following the ceremony, the newly wed couple embarked on a trip to White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia to stay at *The Greenbrier* resort where Steve's father and mother, Laurie and Lilly, had spent their honeymoon many years earlier.



Stephens and Jane on their wedding day, June 6, 1906
(Pictured on the right is Steve’s brother, Paul, a Jesuit priest)

Following their return from West Virginia, Steve and Jane rented a little cottage in Erlanger, which was then rural countryside reached only by train, carriage or on

horseback. During the cold, winter months they rented rooms in Covington. In 1907 they rented a small, frame farmhouse in Ft. Mitchell.

Their first child, Stephens Buckner Cuthbert Blakely, was born on July 14, 1907 and was followed by Edward Courtney Piatt, born fourteen months later on October 11, 1908.

Stephens Blakely ran for the public office of County Attorney for Kenton County in 1909, but was defeated by Frank Hanlon. Since his fledgling law practice was not yet financially successful, Steve and Jane had high hopes of earning a living as an employee of Kenton County. Steve later confided to his diary:

Jane not feeling well and very much discouraged with the prospect. Hard on me to keep up a cheerful front when I know things are worse than even she imagines them to be. Somehow or other I am not discouraged long at a time and while apparently there is nothing to justify me, I am confident that we will make out. Business has been bad, bad, bad - and worse than that, I cannot see the outcome and I must confess there is nothing in my record to encourage me. It has rather been a history of failures than anything else; but still I am - unlike Mr. McCawlier, let me hope - still confident that something would turn up. I am honest, industrious and ambitious, and why I have not been more successful, I can't say - unless I am incompetent and honestly I believe I am more than competent. Years of struggle, a whole life of poverty, days of discouragement, duties and obligations beyond my strength, vanished hopes are making me an old man at 31. Unconquered faith, a determination to succeed, tenacity of purpose have overcome greater obstacles, and with the help of Almighty God, I propose that they fight for me. The humble life I lead is now very dark and cheerless, so little do I require aid, so much is wanting.

Steve nevertheless persevered and business slowly came his way. A few days before Christmas, in this winter of his first political defeat, their only daughter, Jane Ashton Blakely was born December 20, 1909. She was born in the little frame farmhouse in Ft. Mitchell. Her father in his diary recorded Jane Ashton's birth weight as a whopping ten pounds.

Stephens continued his political campaigning in 1910, and ran for the office of City Solicitor for West Covington. He won that election and his business as an attorney improved significantly as a result of the ensuing public recognition. He began his career as a criminal prosecutor and trial lawyer, and was very successful; winning a number of highly publicized criminal cases. He considered himself very prosperous by the end of 1910, having earned a little more than \$2400.00 that year.

In April of 1911, Wykoff Piatt, Steve's brother-in-law and best friend, married Margaret Hamilton James. This time Steve was upset with Wyk because Margaret

was not Catholic and Wyk and "Peggy" were married by an Episcopal minister, not a priest. Steve and Jane reluctantly attended the wedding where insult was added to injury by their not being included in the party sitting at the bridal table. Their friendship strained, Steve and Wyk rarely saw each other until near the end of Wyk's life.

"Little John Ruffner," as Steve's diary reported, was born on November 6, 1911. But the joy of his birth was cut short by a devastating fire just six days later. Steve carried his wife and newborn son safely out of the house, having already sent the older children out ahead of him. The little frame farmhouse and all of its contents went up in flames, in spite of the gallant efforts of Steve and his neighbors.

Within a year, however, Steve purchased five acres of land, including the area where their little house once stood, and he began rebuilding. On a knoll overlooking Pleasant Run Creek, he built a beautiful, two-story Southern colonial, with a large front porch and four huge oak-barrel columns that extended both stories to the roof high above. Their new home was finished and the family of six moved in by the fall of 1913.

In January of 1914, Steve was voted out of office and started a private practice in a new office at 6th and Madison Streets in downtown Covington. The years 1917 and 1918 were devastating for Steve and Jane. Steve lost his father and mentor, Laurie John Blakely on January 17, 1917; and Wyk Piatt, Jane's only sibling, died exactly three months later on April 17th, leaving his widow, "Peggy" and three small children.

This was followed one short year later by yet another tragic event. Steve and Jane's nine-year-old son, Edward Courtney Piatt Blakely died of pneumonia on April 7, 1918. Steve recorded his sentiments that evening in his diary:

Little Courtney died this morning at ten minutes to one after an illness of about four weeks. The little fellow awoke one Saturday morning, March 9th, with a headache. I jokingly told him it was no use to be sick on a holiday, but he was really sick and rapidly developed pneumonia. Everything was done for him and a few days before his death he apparently had begun to recover. He received the Last Sacraments on the 28th of March. During the little fellows' suffering he told me 'Father, I love you the best of all' and I believe that he did. At least all during his little life he showed most affection for me and his greatest pleasure was that he looked like me. It is so hard for his mother and me not to despair, but we are comforted much by the thought that he is happy in heaven now and is interceding for us, and that as long as we live, and when we are old and our children gone from us, we will always have a little boy.

Following the death of her son, Jane took their remaining sons, Steve and John, to

Biloxi, Mississippi, while their daughter, Jane Ashton went to spend the time in Lexington with her grandmother, aunts and uncles. On August 18, 1918, Jane gave birth to another son, Paul Lendrum, who lived only briefly and was baptized by the doctor. The grieving parents, having carried their son, Courtney, to the graveyard a few months earlier, buried a second son on the Blakely family plot in St. Mary's Cemetery, Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky.

Stephens Blakely aligned himself with many organizations and groups. Some were political, others purely social or religious, such as the Knights of St. John's, the Citizens Protective League, the Fort Mitchell Country Club (where he was a charter member), the Civil War Round Table, Kentucky Historical Society, Kenton County and Kentucky Bar Associations, and the Norman Barnes Post of the American Legion. He was a founding member, and first president, of the Christopher Gist Historical Society. He served as Commonwealth Attorney for Kentucky for many years and ran for Lt. Governor on the Democratic ticket, but was not successful in his bid for the nomination



JANE PIATT BLAKELY

Jane DeValcourt [Piatt] Blakely, Steve's wife for twenty two years, died peacefully but unexpectedly on October 6, 1928 of complications that followed a routine surgery. A Requiem Mass was held at St. Mary's Cathedral in Covington, sung by her brother-in-law, Father Paul Blakely. Jane was buried beside her children, Courtney and Paul, at St. Mary's Cemetery in Ft. Mitchell on October 10, 1928.

Shortly after the untimely death of his wife, Steve's life took a strange twist. His widowed sister-in-law, Margaret [James] Piatt, rushed to his side to comfort him; or did she rush to comfort herself? [It is no secret that "Peggy" had serious financial problems following her husband's death, and that she was forced to return to teaching to support herself and her children.] Thus, it is somewhat ironic that the same woman he vehemently opposed when she married his best friend and brother-in-law, Wykoff Piatt, confronted Steve romantically and won his love. Nevertheless, it is equally clear that the respective families had grown close over the years. "Peggy" and her children, Margaret, Page and Wyk, enjoyed many summer days and evenings at "Beechwood" with Steve, Jane and their children.

The inter-family friendship and affection blossomed into love and devotion. Recently discovered letters exchanged between Steve and Peggy, revealed a whirlwind courtship and secret rendezvous' that began less than a scandalous two months after Jane was buried. Although it was generally disfavored by social standards at the time, and by some totally unacceptable, Steve and Peggy were married in New York on June 1, 1929.

Margaret Hamilton James, widow of Jacob Wykoff Piatt, and second wife of Stephens L. Blakely, was born on August 5, 1888 in Lawrenceville, Indiana. She was the daughter of Howard Keats James and Margaret Hamilton. Peggy was a member of the Episcopal Church, but did not object when Steve asked that his brother, Father Paul, perform the marriage. Following a short honeymoon in New York, they returned to Kentucky and merged their two families - cousins became brothers and sisters; aunt and uncle were called "Mom" and "Pop" by all six children.

Peggy encouraged Steve to give up the practice of trial law and concentrate his energies and talents on the development of large corporate clients. Steve followed her advice and won the confidence of several major corporate enterprises in the Northern Kentucky area. His clients included the Green Line Bus Company (where he was a member of the Board of Directors and General Counsel), the C & O Railroad, and the Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company, which was later known as Union Light, Heat & Power Company. Steve Blakely was an owner and officer (Secretary) of Commonwealth Air Transport, Inc., a Kentucky airline based at Boone County Airport. In 1945 this airline applied for, and was granted, permission by the Civil Aeronautics Board to operate feeder routes that served all of Kentucky and adjoining states of Ohio and West Virginia.

Steve suffered his most heart-breaking loss in 1938. His eldest son, Stephens Buckner Blakely, who had just passed the bar examination and married Marjorie Carson from Comer, Georgia a month earlier, was fatally injured in a tragic accident at the Ashland Oil Refinery in Latonia, Kentucky. Young Steve, (as he was called) was truly the "apple of his father's eye". He was industrious, fearless, dashing handsome, admired by almost everyone, had studied hard at law school while holding down a job at the oil refinery, passed the Kentucky bar examination

in anticipation of joining his father's law firm, and married his lady love - only to lose it all at the very cusp of what would have been a very successful career as an attorney, husband, father and citizen. Young Steve's death devastated his father. Stephens Buckner Blakely, Attorney at Law, is the only lawyer enrolled as a member of the Kentucky Bar Association who was admitted post-humously following an Order issued by the Kentucky Court of Appeals. [The Kentucky Supreme Court did not exist in 1938.]

In 1939 the CNC Railroad bought out the Dixie Traction Company, predecessor of the Green Line Bus Company. Alec Bauer, W. T. Russell, Logan Fowler and Steve Blakely established the Dixie Traction Company in the 1920's. As already mentioned, Steve served on the Green Line Board of Directors and acted as General Counsel for many years following the sale of Dixie Traction Company. Steve was a widely recognized legal expert and authority on the complex Federal rules and regulations governing the operations of interstate carriers such as the Green Line Bus Company. Accolades and achievements would compliment the life of Stephens L. Blakely up to the very end of his life. Indeed, he chose to continue working as an advocate on behalf of others until he was physically unable to continue the work he loved so much because of hospitalization and illness that eventually killed him on February 24, 1959.

His funeral Requiem Mass was sung at Blessed Sacrament Church in Fort Mitchell, followed by interment at St. Mary's Cemetery, on the Blakely plot, joining his parents, first wife and sons.

Peggy survived her second husband 15 years, living virtually all of that time at "Beechwood". Margaret [James] Piatt Blakely died on June 27, 1974 and is buried with her parents at Spring Grove Cemetery, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The five surviving children were:

John Ruffner Blakely, who inherited the family homestead, "Beechwood" following the death of his stepmother, and married Jane Grant Reardon, a widow with four children in 1965. John married late in life, at the age of 55, and never had children of his own. He helped raise Jane's children and won their hearts as though he was their natural father. Before John died, he legally adopted all of Jane's children; however, none of them abandoned or changed their surname from Reardon to Blakely. His wife, Jane [Grant] Reardon-Blakely died quite suddenly on July 14, 1980. John Ruffner Blakely died on Good Friday, April 2, 1999. He and his wife, Jane are buried in the Blakely plot at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Jane Ashton Blakely married John Randolph Woodrough in 1935 and was the mother of three children, Stephens Blakely (born September 4, 1937), Laura Jane (born June 14, 1939) and Susan Elizabeth (born November 1, 1943). Sadly, her marriage did not last; John and Jane separated in 1948 and Jane was compelled to raise her children alone, albeit under the watchful eye of her father and stepmother,

Stephens L. and Peggy. Her husband, John did not remarry and died in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1970 at the age of 61.

Her only son, Steve followed her family's footsteps by studying law and passing the Kentucky Bar Examination following his graduation from Xavier University in 1958 and the University of Kentucky College of Law in 1961. Steve married Margaret Ann Vollmer in 1963, and they have two grown children. He continues his law practice today with his own firm (The Banking Law Firm), specializing in Federal banking regulatory law, and lives with his wife in St. Petersburg, Florida.

Jane Ashton's second child, Laura Jane graduated from Cardome Academy in Georgetown, Kentucky in 1957. She married Charles Craig Glass in 1958 and together they raised four children. Charles died of cancer at the age of 56 in 1994. Laura remarried in 2000 to Ronald Nash Steneck of Florida and resides today with him in Belleair, Florida.

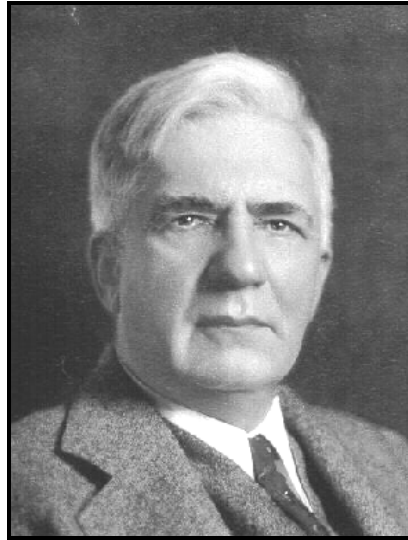
Jane Ashton's youngest daughter, Susan Elizabeth graduated from Beechwood High School in 1962. She married first, John Siro Vazquez in 1966 who died less than two years later, on February 24, 1968. She then married James Gilbert Powner in 1969. While married to "Jim," Susan completed her college education at Wayne State University in Michigan, graduating with honors while working a full-time job and raising three children. Jim Powner died in an automobile accident on October 10, 1999. They were divorced at the time of his death. On July 2, 2000 Susan married David Purdy of Bloomfield, Michigan and today they reside in Oakland Township, Michigan.

Jane Ashton [Blakely] Woodrough celebrated her 93rd birthday on December 20, 2002 and lives with assisted care in Largo, Florida. She eagerly awaits the completion of this book, since its author is her daughter and constant companion, always asking for more family history details.

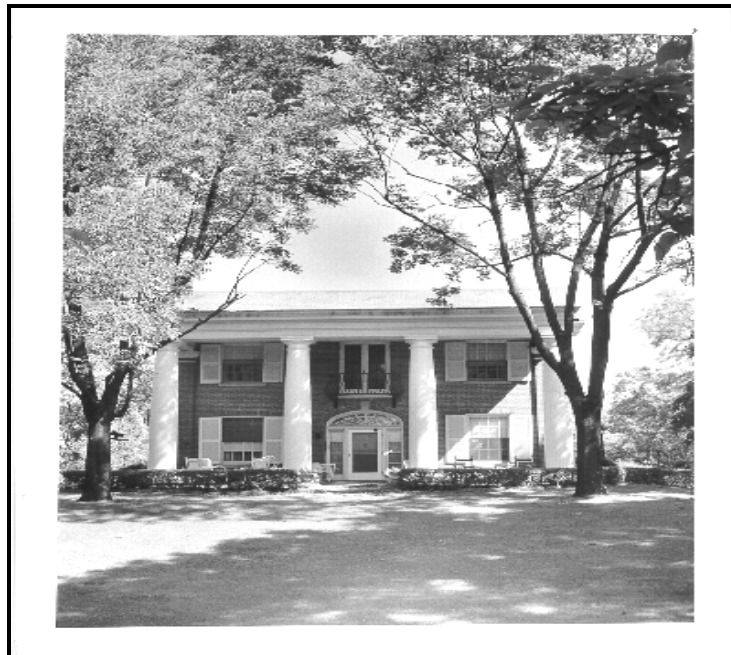
Jacob Wykoff Piatt III, (Peggy's only son) married twice and was the father of two children, Jacob Wykoff Piatt IV and Page Piatt. His stepdaughter, Craig Kerkow, studied law at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, passing the Tennessee Bar Examination, and was subsequently appointed a Judge in the Tennessee Circuit Court of Appeals. His son, Jacob Piatt IV, was born mentally challenged and lives in Tennessee, close to his half sister. His daughter, Page was born around 1940; however, nothing more is known about her life or where she currently lives.

Peggy's second child, Elizabeth Page Piatt married Earl Carran in 1932; however she was never blessed with children. Her husband, who was a decorated officer in the Army in World War II, died in December 1963. She later married Jay Harris, a well-known local businessman in the construction industry, and lived with him in Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky until her death on August 16, 1983. Page is buried at Highland Cemetery in Ft. Mitchell in the Carran plot, alongside her first husband, Earl.

Peggy's youngest child, Margaret Hamilton Piatt married Clay Edward ("Pete") Delauney in 1935, at the age of 19. Pete and Margaret were the parents of two children. Their son, Clay Edward, Jr. and called "Pete," was tragically murdered in New York City in 1979. Their daughter, Margaret Hamilton, married Ernest Helfenstein in 1959. "Margo" and "Ernie" have two grown daughters and currently live in Daytona, Florida. Margaret [Piatt] Delauney died in 1999, followed a short time later by "Pete," her husband of 64 years, in January of 2000.



**Stephens L. Blakely c. 1957
And the home he called "Beechwood"**



PAUL LENDRUM BLAKELY



Paul Lendrum Blakely, the second child of Laurie John and Lilly [Lendrum] Blakely, was born on February 29th, 1880, in Covington Kentucky. His father duly noted the birth in the family bible with this inscription:

Paul Lendrum Blakely, second son and child of Laurie J. and Lilly, his wife, was born in Covington, Ky. at No. Greenup Street on Sunday morning the 29th day of February 1880 at ten minutes after six o'clock, it being the fifth Sunday in said month. Baptized by Rev. Wm. Roberts, Rector of St. John's Church, Covington. His sponsors being Henry Clay Hallam and Sallie Cambron Hallam, his wife.

The following article, written by John LaFarge, appeared in *America* magazine, a publication of the Jesuits, on March 13th, 1943. This tells the story of Father Paul. [Note: The author has taken the liberty of adding or correcting, in brackets, some inaccuracies that appeared in the article.]

On what would have been his birthday in a leap year, the last day of February, [1943] the Rev. Paul L. Blakely, S. J., was buried at the Jesuit Novitiate of Saint-Andrew-on-Hudson, Poughkeepsie, New York. If he had lived until February 29th, 1944, he would have celebrated his sixteenth birthday and his sixty fourth year. Or rather, others would have celebrated it for him, since Father Blakely had a constitutional inability to direct attention to himself. He considered himself fortunate that even the semblance of a birthday was something that came about only once every four years.

Having lived and worked with Father Blakely on the Staff of *America* for more than sixteen years of his twenty nine in this occupation, I can say that that which impressed me when I first made his acquaintance is the same that causes me a little marveling now that he is gone. How was it that the valiant man and the genial, tender-hearted priest who was second to none in his influence upon the thought and--in many ways--upon the actual destiny of the Catholic Church in America, was so comparatively little known except in name to the outer world?

Over 1,100-signed articles appeared in *America* over Father Blakely's name. His unsigned editorials passed the 2,000 mark several years ago and were between 2,500 and 3,000 when, on Thursday morning, February 25th, he sent down to the printer the proofs on the last material, in the March 6th issue, that his indefatigable Underwood had typed off--always with the same ease, clarity, precision of thought, length, style, language. But with all this incredible wealth of authorship, Paul Blakely never had the mind to collect even the humblest dividends of an author's fame, nor to excite any curiosity about himself. That some souls were puzzled by his using the very transparent disguise of 'John Wiltbye' was a source to him of mild amusement. He was particularly delighted by the kind old lady who wrote in, after one of the many John Wiltbye articles, solicitously expressing the idea that quite possibly John Wiltbye was not such a worldly reprobate and might have a priestly vocation.

Perhaps the key to this paradox lay in the very fiction of 'John Wiltbye' itself. The name, by the way, was a genuine family name in Paul Blakely's ancestry. [Not a proven fact - yet] 'Cricket Wainscott', a second pseudonym, used when Wiltbye and Blakely both occupied the field, once adorned an elderly colored man in Father Blakely's native Kentucky. When Blakely wrote for the sake of writing, more or less, combining business with relaxation, he wrote in the style and under the name of John Wiltbye. But when Blakely wrote under his own name or without signature, he wrote invariably because in his mind there was something, which desperately needed saying. His craft was finished; it was an exceedingly polished, skilled, flexible technique, the very acme of logical exposition, adroit polemic, editorial rapier-thrusts. But it was a mere instrument with which to convey to the reader what he felt the reader should know, and the quicker and more clearly the reader knew it, the better.

It was Father Blakely's absorption in the causes that he argued that made him indifferent to his own reputation. But that same absorption weighted with intense feeling the winged arrows of his countless written words, and sent them piercing through to spheres of influence that some church historian, one of these days, will enjoy analyzing.

The focus and source of these interests, for the greater part, was his profound, exact and painstaking study of the American Constitution, in the light of the nation's history, and of the other basic documents that related to it. This study was reinforced by an extensive and valuable library of books on the Constitution, Lincoln and American history that he collected through the years.

Father Blakely's thought upon the importance of this subject might be summed up in three simple propositions, as I have obtained from him in many conversations.

First, the Founding Fathers, and the political inheritance they bequeathed to us, were guided by an uncommon degree of practical wisdom, one notable part of which was their respect for religion, the law of God and for religious education. The Constitution, as they left it to us, is a powerful safeguard for morality, freedom and social peace.

Secondly, it is quite possible that the exigencies of government in the present-day world will require alterations in the Constitution. Father Blakely never undertook to deify either the plan or the origins of the United States. But if or when such changes should be made, they should themselves be made constitutionally, not by violence, subterfuge or usurpation of power. And the Supreme Court of the United States was called to be our chief protection against such a calamity.

It was therefore--in the third place--our duty as citizens and upon our conscience as Catholics to be on our guard against such tendencies, most of which, from Father Blakely's point of view, manifested themselves through the attempt to place upon the central government the functions which should rightfully be performed by the individual States. The defense, intellectual and editorial, that he constructed against such tendencies, was maintained consistently through all the administrations he lived under while on the Staff of *America*; through Wilson, Harding, Coolidge, Hoover and the present administration as well. The Blakely position was a non-partisan position, based upon an interpretation of the Constitution. Whether his critics agree with him or not, they should at least recognize its unchanging consistency.

Father Blakely was literally a born journalist, for his father, Laurie John Blakely, 'every inch a Catholic,' was appointed Dean, in 1912, of the newly founded School of Journalism of St. Xavier College, Cincinnati and died January 25, 1917 in Covington, Ky. where Paul was born. The words applied to Blakely, Senior, by the Rector of St. Xavier at that time, Rev. F. Heiermann, S. J., apply in telling fashion to Blakely, Junior; only lifted to a higher and still more consecrated plane:

He looked on journalism as a great and noble profession, burdened with high responsibilities, but a power in the realm of truth, making for clear thinking and clean living. In this high ideal, he himself set

the example. No one who had come in contact with him could ever forget him. His character had something of the courteous, gentle but independent and uncompromising chivalry of old. He was a knight without fear and without reproach. His success may not always have appeared before the world, but his life was a blessing and inspiration to all who knew him.

Father Blakely's middle name, which he rarely used, Lendrum, came from his mother, Lilly Hudson Lendrum Blakely. His father, who was a Confederate Colonel¹² as well as a member of the Kentucky Bar and constant contributor to Louisville, Covington and Cincinnati papers, was the son of an English-born Virginian¹³ who was a convert through his marriage to the Catholic faith. The name was originally Blakeleigh¹⁴ and came from Lancashire.

Paul himself attended St. Xavier College in Cincinnati and on July 30, 1897, entered the Society of Jesus at St. Stanislaus Novitiate, Florissant, Missouri. He completed his studies at St. Louis University and was ordained to the priesthood in 1912. He taught Latin, Greek and English at Detroit College, 1900-1902, and was professor of Literature at St. Louis University, 1906-1909. In July, 1914, he became as Associate Editor of *America*.

Most men who have very intense convictions operate within a rather limited range. Father Blakely's dominant interests, however, covered so wide a field that their mere recital would fill a good part of a volume. Moreover, like his own father, and a 'born journalist', he was averse to systematization, and wrote--save for his purely religious productions--with an eye upon the issue or controversy of the moment. If I were to single out a few matters about which his convictions and expression polarized, as it were, I should nominate as favorites the individual's liberty, under the American Constitution, to fulfill his duties to God and country; the liberty of the Church, here and everywhere in the world; the integrity and the freedom of Catholic education, in all its degrees and phases; the separation of religion and politics; the danger of political or governmental centralization; the impossibility of legislating people into virtue; the sanctity of the family as the unit of society, and of the marriage bond as its protection.

Some day, when the history of the Church in this country is finally written, I believe that Paul Blakely will be adequately recognized as

¹² No, he wasn't; never served in the Confederate army. This appears to be a romantic family myth.

¹³ No, his father was born in Pittsburgh; never lived in Virginia. Another romantic family myth. (His mother was from an old Virginia family.)

¹⁴ No evidence of this spelling found in IGI files for England. The Lancashire part seems correct.

the man who saved Catholic education, at a critical moment, from one of the insidious threats to its existence; absorption through a Federal Department of Education. Father Blakely's long, lone campaign of opposition to the establishment of such a department was no quixotic crusade. It succeeded in clarifying not only Catholic, but also a large and influential sector of non-Catholic opinion on an issue that touched upon the nature of our government, the basic interests of religion, the history of education in the United States.

He will likewise be remembered for the part he played in the memorable investigation of Catholic charitable institutions under John Purroy Mitchel, Mayor of New York. By his vigorous stand in this affair and the influence he wielded he succeeded, as asserted by many of his contemporaries, in saving from destruction the private charities of the Catholic Church in New York City--and by inference, in many another city of the nation. The cause of private charity, incidentally, was one particularly dear to the heart of Father Blakely, and especially of personal, as opposed to merely institutionalized charity. This was expressed in his keen solicitude for the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. He was eminently a lover of God's poor, of every race, color and creed.

The rights of the workingman to organize and the duty of the employer to secure for him a living wage, were defended by Father Blakely, interpreting for Americans the teachings of Pope Leo's *Rerum Novarum*, at a time when these teachings were denounced as 'Socialistic' by pious Catholic laymen and as yet seldom, if ever, referred to in the pulpits.

Consideration of the rights of the Negro, not as a Negro but as an ordinary human being, to equal protection before the law, led Father Blakely to go directly counter to his professed distrust of Federal measures and openly advocate the enactment of the Federal anti-lynching bill.

His controversies, striking as they were, played but a minor part in the total of Father Blakely's careful teaching on a positive and rounded ideal. Totally alien to Puritanism and narrow-minded sadness; an ideal of religion and of a full and many sided human living. The ardor of his defense grew from a deep valuing of the truly good things of life; in art, education, culture, friendly companionship, all of which he saw in true Ignatian Spirit, as gifts of the Creator leading men back to Him. The last of his signed articles is almost a mirror of Blakely's true and genial self.

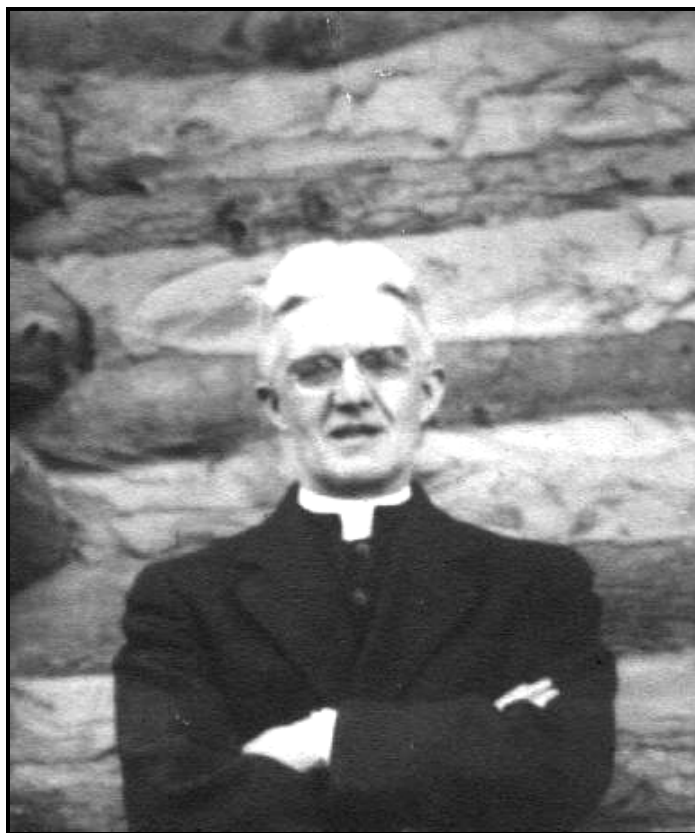
A man of strong convictions and wide sympathies forms friends

among the dead as among the living. Charles Dickens, George Washington, Robert E. Lee, and particularly Abraham Lincoln were among Blakely's greatest intimates, and with the latter there were singular bonds of regional association, temperament, cast of mind. But in the world of God's chosen ones, none was dearer to him than Bernadette of Lourdes.

As for his friends among the living, none were more remarkable than the unnumbered and unnamed host of men and women to whom, not as a scholar or a writer, but as an infinitely self-sacrificing priest and ever-patient counselor he brought enlightenment, courage, spiritual direction and consolation through the hidden side of his life, a busy priestly ministry for which he found time out of his hours of much-needed sleep and leisure. In his early years he lectured widely on history and sociology, and visited in the slum areas and night courts for first hand information.

For more than twenty-six years, almost to the day of his death, Father Blakely, year in and year out, devoted a Sunday a month, with Mass and instructions, to a retreat group at the Cenacle Convent on Riverside Drive. For a dozen years or more he celebrated two Masses on all remaining Sundays and preached to the poor at St. John's Church on East Seventy-second Street. With equal constancy he labored for the best part of a lifetime for the spiritual benefit of those admirable Religious women, the Helpers of the Holy Souls. Where he could not work personally, he followed with burning interest and passionate regret that personal service was not possible, for home missions, whose neglect, especially in the rural regions, he bitterly deplored. Visiting the sick, instructing the ignorant, counseling the doubtful, relieving those in want and suffering, were all in the day's work for Paul L. Blakely. Just a glow from that inner light penetrated to *America's* readers through his weekly homily on the Gospel of the day. Just a glow; the full radiance of that hidden and supernatural life might be, dear reader, too much for your and my eye to endure in our present condition. Some day, too, that revelation will be made, not by historians, but by the Judge of the living and the dead.

In the meanwhile, as we pray for the soul of Paul L. Blakely who, with all his learning and worldly wisdom, was as obedient and simple a Religious as any novice, we may pray that we who are left may be given the grace to carry on, however imperfectly, the great work that he brought to high stature in the years God granted him.



Elizabeth Ashton Blakely



The Blakely family bible bears this inscription:

Elizabeth Ashton Blakely, third child and daughter of Laurie J. Blakely and Lilly, his wife, was born in Covington, Ky. at No. 64 Robbins Street, at four o'clock and forty three minutes, of Thursday, June 28th, 1883, that day being the sixth anniversary of the happy marriage of the baby's parents. Baptized by the Rev. Henry Tappert, assistant pastor of the Church of Mother of God. Sponsors: Bernard and Elizabeth Becker.

What follows is a letter written by those who knew her best, the Sisters of the Visitation, when they reported her death to their sister house in Wheeling, West Virginia. Regretfully, the Convent and Academy no longer exist. The "Sister Deposee" referred to is her sister, Susan, who had been the prior Mother Superior, but was not serving in that capacity when the letter was written. A better script of her life could not be written.

**From our Monastery of Cardome
Georgetown, Kentucky
Feast of the Sacred Heart, 1948**

**Very honored Mother and dear Sisters;
Throughout the past year we have been impressed by the frequency with which our loved Sister Mary Agatha has repeated a favorite sentence, 'The price of peace is pain'. But we little dreamed that she was expressing a daily experience of mind and heart and soul. It is now in the dark sorrow of her passing that we, too, are endeavoring to learn the full meaning of that maxim. With her sister, our very honored Sister Deposee, we are carrying a cross beneath which we stagger, and as we note her personal grief our hearts are pierced afresh.**

When our dear Sister left us in mid-May to go to the hospital for a diagnosis, we thought that she looked buoyantly healthy, although we realized that beneath that appearance, something was seriously wrong, or Sister Agatha would never have admitted the need of medical attention. We had heard not a word of pain, sickness or suffering, only the simple request: 'Please pray for me.' Your Charities may realize then how alarming the doctor's report that sister had probably been in a partial coma for over a year and the wonder was that the excruciating suffering which she must have endured had not caused a complete collapse. Following a two-weeks preparation, she underwent a severe operation on the morning of Corpus Christi. It was pronounced quite successful and she began a hopeful and satisfactory recovery. Every subsequent report from the faithful Sisters of Charity indicated her return in a short time, completely well. How great was our shock the following evening when Sister Jane Frances was summoned from Matins to learn that her sister had taken a turn and despite the efforts of several doctors to save her, it was improbable that she would live till morning. Sister remained in a vigil of prayer and anxiety all night, receiving hourly reports until the final message at three-fifteen Saturday morning told her that all was over. Our cherished Sister had passed peacefully to her eternal reward, fortified by the Last Sacraments administered by our Spiritual Father, Rev. George O'Bryan, chaplain of St. Joseph's hospital. The tolling after the morning Angelus caused a general shock from which we have not yet recovered. Sister was brought back to us late Saturday afternoon, and as we bent over her, we read in her face all the pent up suffering which she had hidden from us for so long. The sweet smile, however, told us far better than words that she must have been thinking at the last moment 'The price of peace is pain'. That smile, too, revealed the loving welcome to the Divine Bridegroom--Jesus had passed this way again. And we remembered another of her favorite sentences; 'But one thing I fear, that Jesus may be passing and that He may not pass this way again.'

Elizabeth Ashton Blakely was born at Covington, Kentucky, June 28, 1883, the third of six children of Laurie J. and Lilly Lendrum Blakely. She was the center of attraction in that happy household and the spoiled darling of her father. At a very early age she manifested unusual literary propensities. This was a particular delight to Mr. Blakely, then professor of Journalism at Xavier University, Cincinnati, noted editor, and contributor to the leading Catholic periodicals of the country. Dinners at the Blakely home were sheer literary battles. Elizabeth always won, for her father, as the completely biased judge, always upheld her opinions! Her girlhood was passed in Covington where she received her early education with

the sisters of Charity until her enrollment at Cardome. Following graduation in 1902 she returned to her home and to all the allurements that the world offered to a young woman of her charm. Of striking physical beauty and vibrant personality, she was constantly sought after and soon became the center of all hearts. For many years the delights of the world vied with the urging of her Divine Spouse, and when in 1910 our beloved Sister Deposee announced her own intention of entering the cloister, Sister urged her along with the consoling assurance that she would stay at home and manage the household.

This occasion she interpreted as the Will of God and the settling of all would-be spiritual directors of her soul; thus she waved her younger sister off to the cloister and turned with great relief to the life that at that time she enjoyed.

It was shortly after this that the famous Paulist, Father Younan, gave a mission at St. Mary's Cathedral, Covington. The beautiful and gracious Elizabeth Blakely was seated near the front of the church, and there was reenacted the celebrated meeting between the Bishop of Geneva and Madame de Chantal. Following the sermon, Father Younan sought Bishop Mass and asked to be introduced to the striking young lady who had been sitting just three pews from the pulpit. The meeting was immediately arranged. Father Younan acknowledged the mere formality of introduction and instantly reprimanded Elizabeth for struggling against the grace of God, for the aura of a frustrated religious dedication was all about her, every movement, every facial expression revealed the high flights of a soul that she was chaining to earth. She considered his words of warning; she listened, and the call of the Spouse was unmistakable. It was then, that with characteristic firmness she put aside all that she had loved and longed for in life and gave herself with wholehearted energy to the preparations for the novitiate. Accordingly, in 1913 she was received into our community at Mount de Chantal. Surely the zest with which she entered upon her new life and the fidelity with which she carried out every detail of it, compensated in part for the youthful indifference towards the call of her Divine Spouse. Following her Profession in 1915, she was appointed assistant to the very honored Mother Joseph Aloysius, then Mistress of Novices at Mount de Chantal. Religious and teaching duties occupied her life, as day by day she grew in the Visitandine way of love and simplicity. In 1922, at the request of our honored Mother Mary Agatha Cahill, Sister was sent to Cardome to help us in our emergency. This was a joyful reunion for the two sisters and a delightful return of the native to her old Kentucky home. When, however, the need had abated she was happy to set out for the house of her profession. It was to be like a

second novitiate, but it was not to be for long. Again, in 1925, our dear Sisters of Mount de Chantal came to our assistance and Sister Agatha was sent to us on a mission of love and obedience, this time to work out all the remaining years of her life in teaching and religious duties at Cardome.

Our treasured Sister was the living example of our Holy Father's words: "What does it matter to a Visitation nun whether she is in this place or that, provided she can find a house of the Visitation where she can practice her Rules and Constitutions?" Cardome was naturally her first home, but Mount de Chantal was the hallowed spot of her oblation; Cardome became an assignment of obedience to which she submitted without a single regret, yet her loyalty to Mount de Chantal was without parallel. Her Charity never referred to it except as 'home', and she spoke of 'Mother' so affectionately that often the Sisters thought she was speaking of her own mother. Every Feast day of the Wheeling community or its members, every anniversary, every occasion of joy or sorrow at the Mount was the inspiration for a beautifully penned note. Though Sister Agatha wielded a facile pen, she wrote simply and briefly and managed to say in a few lines what another would have needed pages to express. The only known letters that she actually wrote were our Community letters, and Your Charities must surely realize how sorely she is already missed in this capacity. When Sister received the lovely Centennial folder from the Mount, she carried it in her pocket for days, and on every occasion of exhibiting it, she exclaimed, "Look at it! Did you ever see such majesty? Look at the expanse, look at those paths! Was there ever such beauty? Oh! I'm so homesick!"

In 1937, Sister Agatha was appointed Mistress of Novices, and to this charge she brought all the love and devotion that her great soul could summon. She humbly realized her responsibilities before God and sought to carry them into effect with utmost exactitude, relying on His gracious help and the intercessions of our Holy Founders. Sister was most maternal in her solicitude for the novices. Admonitions or words of direction were given with a heart full of zeal and love, and invariably after a correction she would turn back to the humbled novice, and with overwhelming humility of her own, add: "Please pray for me, that while I preach to you I may not myself become a castaway." Sister Agatha's humility was magnificent.

Most regal herself in bearing, she ever sought to instill into the minds of her novices that precious maxim of Mother Pennet: "As spouses of the Son of God, we ought to treat one another as princesses." The courtesy and simplicity of the King's Court reign now in the novitiate because Sister Agatha was the quintessence of the Spouse's dignity.

Yet like Him who deigned to wait upon His Apostles, she too served her little charges whenever the occasion arose. She never gave a second thought as to whether it became her position to carry breakfast to a sick novice; she surely did it; she helped them mend and sew, sweep and wash dishes and all labor became light for them because their princess-leader showed them the glorious way to the Heart of Love.

The sweetest and most impressive tribute to her charity has been the faithful conduct of the novices during her absence. Surely her spirit has guided them, for not a single lapse of duty or the most penetrating observer could note observance. We have watched them carry on faithfully day after day, the senior of the group conducting the daily noviceship, each duty accomplished at the specified time, each novice in her place as usual, not a waver of panic or distraction, not a word to break the silence, even though their hearts must have languished for some human consolation. In these words, one Sister has expressed the opinion of all: 'The novices are trained forever; just give us some more subjects and place them with these little sisters--they'll have the spirit in no time. Sister Agatha has left them the heritage of religious exactitude, but she herself will never leave them.'

When the terse message announced the approach of Sister's death, the novices spent the night in prayer, testifying their love and gratitude for the care and diligence she had taken in forming them into holy Rule. From the time that her body was brought to the choir on Saturday afternoon, until it was wheeled out on Monday morning, there was not a single moment of the day or night when some or all of the novices were not kneeling beside her keeping a vigil of prayers. Such a guard of love and respect for so many hours was not easy to arrange for just five sisters, and we cannot understand exactly how they managed it, but somehow they did, calmly and unobtrusively.

Sister Agatha's zeal for observances knew neither limitation nor exception. She wished her novices to be the incarnation of the Visitandine spirit, and to that end she urged frequent reading of the particular customs, leaving the compliance therewith to each one's spirit of obedience. There was just one unchanging requirement; that all of the observances be read on Aids Day sometime before the meeting. The Sisters of the community were not aware of this provision, but Your Charities may imagine the thrill of heart and holy envy that overcame those who had recently left the novitiate when they entered the choir last Sunday. It was Aids Day; their loved former Mother lay in state, and around her knelt five novices with well-worn copies of the Observances in their hands just as usual. The reading was perhaps poignant, but we believe that each loved custom became dearer than ever to their single heart, and forever fixed in

their single will, and that as their tear-blinded eyes scanned the pages, each syllable was adding a new floweret to their Mistress' crown.

Of Father Blakely the Jesuits could say that he had a prodigious memory, and of Sister Agatha the Visitandine can make the same statement. Her mind was the epitome of order and simplicity. Like the great Doctor Johnson, whom she loved and admired, if she did not know a thing herself, she could direct one to the exact page where it could be found. For several years, as Librarian for the Academy, her Charity astounded everyone who requested a book. She could not be bothered with a system or a file; she simply knew where each book was, far and wide though the shelves extended. From her hospital bed she directed by mail the course of studies for her classes, stating in concise terms the exact shelf and position of necessary textbooks; and for the novices, she assigned the spiritual reading matter, even to the very page, for the next several months. In the last hours preceding her operation she dictated to our out-sister the final examination questions for her classes. Her knowledge of the classics that she lovingly taught for twenty-five years was as thorough as is attainable by the mortal mind. Sister Agatha herself remained hidden in her teaching; but letters of condolences pouring in from the parents of her pupils are bringing to light the extent of her powerful influence, for every letter speaks with a parent's genuine gratitude of the noble instinct for fine reading with which she inspired the child. Her mastery of French was equally profound, and the solid foundation that her pupils have taken with them into college has called forth many a professor's testimony to her teaching ability.

Her Charity was inspired with a sincere love for all orders of religion and all the undertakings of the church, but her pets were the Indian and Negro missions. To them went every offering she could make, materially and spiritually, until she became involved in an almost nationwide business of benefactions. Kateri Takakwitha was her darling and delight, and many times she begged for the privilege of naming a novice in Kateri's honor. Several years ago when we needed financial aid to build a dormitory annex, Sister Agatha made a daring promise to Kateri. The little Indian maid came to our assistance beyond our most ardent hopes, and Sister fulfilled her promise in a manner that has never known a moment's respite. The visible result is the Indian Room, dedicated to Kateri, now an historic spot at Cardome. Once a butler's pantry in the Governor's house, it is the most obscure room in the building, but all sorts of beautiful Indian relics and curios grace the interior, each placed with unstudied artistry. By leaps and bounds the room grew from nothing, naturally and realistically. There are many genuine Indian pieces, and so much atmosphere that even an Indian would feel at home in Kateri's shrine.

Being Sister Agatha, she dared to introduce some anachronisms; pictures of her 'heros--all', her father and Mark Twain who are twins, Father Blakely, Washington, Lincoln and Macarthur, blanked by the Confederate Seal and the American flag. Sister herself had certain Indian features of high cheekbones and extremely vivid coloring. For this reason, the wee ones became confused, and one little girl asked recently 'Is Sister Jane Frances an Indian, too?' That became a household word, and Sister Agatha never ceased to enjoy the naive inquiry. At the risk of going on indefinitely, we should like Your Charities to know of the sweet simplicity with which she might accept a beautiful Indian headdress from a benefactor and the equal grace with which she would receive a crude crayon drawing from a child who wanted to add an artistic touch to the gallery. Each gift had an appropriate place for the time, though it naturally became a case of survival of the fittest. The Indian Room housed a large collection of recording in music, drama and literature, and the girls stampeded to the scene whenever there was a rumor that Sister was arranging an evening of records. It was here that every child in the school learned to appreciate the best things in music and the classics.

Our enclosure grounds are studded with little holy poverty monuments to Sister Agatha. Here and there are home-made bird baths, miraculously balanced by wedges of stone, from the limbs of trees hang simple bird houses, tenanted and otherwise. We believe that Your Charities will agree that the holy monk who watered a dry stick for twenty years has long since been outdone by the novices who tended the bird baths at Cardome, carrying water to fill them daily even in the dead of winter when it froze the minute it was poured into the basin. When Sister Agatha realized to the extreme to which her novices had gone she said with a characteristic laugh, 'Well, I didn't mean for her to lose her mind over the charge, but oh! that perfect obedience is a joy!' The dearest spot on the grounds is Nazareth, scene of everything light and lovely that comes to the mind of the novice. Nazareth is a completely cloistered, rain proof little hermitage, most uniquely constructed of gratings from our foundation at White Sulphur. The four corners are large wooden shutters, really 'lifted' as Sister Agatha explained, from windows on the Governor's house. An architect would envy the arrangement within; each corner is a cupboard, the rustic benches fit against the sides; over each entry is a statue of Our Lady and St. Joseph and the exterior is charmingly landscaped with Sister's transplantings. How often on hot summer evenings did the novices sit with their Mistress and watch lovely winged creatures come and go and get all mixed up on their mending, and just as often when Sister Agatha was being attacked herself by some winged monster, she would laugh at the ordeal and when finally she had brought the attacker to a limp on the table before her, like St.

Francis, she would direct all minds heavenward, and marvel at the manifestation of God's glory in the beautiful gilt and color of his wings.

Sometimes there were impromptu entertainments at Nazareth, charades taken from the writings of our Holy Founders or Rodrigues, and always when a postulant arrived or a novice was about to be graduated, there was something very special in her honor. Nazareth was the psychological, spiritual and maternal product of Sister Agatha's solicitude to provide a retreat for her novices, complete in every detail and at the cost of a few old shutters and some paint. For a change of scene, she provided Bethlehem, further off on the grounds. Bethlehem was true to its name, simply a little open fireplace surrounded by upturned crates for seats, enclosed by a hedge; and here on crisp fall evenings when there was a call to sit quietly under the open sky and rest from the burdens of the day, the Mistress and her charges gathered round the fireplace. Truly then were the stars overhead 'the thoughts of God in His heaven', and again all hearts were turned up to Him, and if sometimes He provided a spectacular meteorical performance for them, the novices assured their Mistress that all the parties in the glittering, gay life of the world could not be compared with the sheer rapture of a simple night at Bethlehem. Sometimes the group told ghost stories at Bethlehem, for that was one of Sister Agatha's pet diversions, and quite often the tales became so weird and the atmosphere so eerie that the dignified Mistress and her little band had to pick up their skirts and fly by night into Egypt!

Every free moment, every unexpected release from class, found Sister Agatha quietly kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament. It was there that she grew in union with our Lord and received the inspiration and strength to carry the great cross of the last years of her life 'as becomes the bride of the Crucified'. There in silent prayer she learned to model her life on His, the imitation of which found its most ardent expression in her multitudinous kindnesses. And there in sheer contemplation she realized the value of the hidden life and the most effective way of teaching it to her novices. She loved the Holy Sacrifice and the Office, and she inspired the novices with an earnest endeavor to put life and love and real meaning into every bow and genuflection and ceremony in the choir, and out of it. Above everything else, she loved the Visitation and all that pertained to it, for she considered it the greatest privilege of her life to belong to an Order dedicated to the honor of our heavenly Mother. Though Sister's life was essentially hidden, and though she could slip out of sight like a magician, yet there were times when she was forced to receive a visitor, either a personal friend or a community guest, and

she rose to the occasion with all the inborn charm of a Southern hostess and all the innate grace of Christ that sprang from her soul.

Sister Agatha was an extraordinary disciplinarian, and in this capacity she served as Sister Jane Frances' greatest assistant. Despite the severe rebukes that she administered and the enormous power that she exercised in this charge, the girls respected her with esteem near to worship. Sister Agatha will have a substitute, but she can never be replaced.

The funeral of our beloved Sister took place on Monday morning, Feast of Our Lady, Mediatrix of All Graces. Sister was almost hidden in death by the mass of floral expressions that filled our choir, and the chapel was crowded with family, friends and alumnae. An exquisite tribute was paid dear Sister in the eulogy delivered by Father Alphonsus Kruip, C. P., whose grief at her passing is like that of a real brother. Sister was laid to rest in our little cemetery while all creatures of nature that she loved so much sang a farewell song and the blue grass of her native state waved all around, and the South wind blew. It was as if each thing of God had been created for this momentous occasion of escorting her back to Him.



Sister Mary Agatha Blakely

When the Convent was closed and all the nuns had gone to various Visitation houses, Cardome was sold by the Visitation Order to the town of Georgetown, Kentucky. The nun's cemetery was removed, with reverence and dignity, to the church grounds in White Sulphur Springs, Kentucky. The beautiful chapel, that rang with the chants of the nuns at prayer, and the girls of the academy singing the Mass and Benedictions for so many years, was deconsecrated and the holy objects contain within were dispersed to various churches across the state. There is little remaining today of the Cardome of old.

Susan Haughton Blakely



Another entry in the Blakely family bible, written in ink by the hand of Laurie J. Blakely reads:

Susan Haughton Blakely, fourth child and second daughter of Laurie J. Blakely and Lilly, his wife, was born in Covington, Ky. at No. 53 East 4th Street at five minutes before six o'clock p.m. of Saturday, May 23rd, in the year 1885. Baptized by the Rev. Henry Tappert, assistant at the Church of the Mother of God. Her sponsors were Mr and Mrs. Joseph VanLeunen.

Susan received her primary education at LaSalette Academy, which was not far from their home in Covington. When it came time for her secondary, or high school, education Susan was sent to the newly opened Academy for Girls, called "Cardome," in Georgetown, Kentucky. Cardome, which is from the Latin, "Cara Domus" meaning 'dear home', was a college preparatory school run by the Visitation order of nuns. Susan enrolled at Cardome in the 1900-01 school year and graduated in 1904. Following high school, her father in college level studies tutored her at home.

Unlike Elizabeth, her sister, Susie knew from an early age that she had a vocation to the service of God; a feeling that was probably reinforced by her years at Cardome. She spent six years at the Blakely family home, studying under her father's guidance and testing the world of society. Susan attended parties, visited friends, even went to St. Louis and spent time with her Aunt, Uncle and cousins. But by 1910, her mind made up, she returned to Cardome and entered the novitiate.

Susan Haughton Blakely professed her vows on May 8, 1912 and chose the name "Jane Frances," after the foundress of the Visitation Order, St. Jane Frances de Chantal. The Visitation's are a contemplative, or cloistered order, spending many hours each day in silence and prayer. They would leave the cloister only long enough to teach their students, returning to it when classes were over.

In August 1976 Ramona Marsh interviewed Sister Jane Frances and the following are excerpts from her article, which appeared in *The Graphic*, Georgetown, Kentucky:

The table was set and the food simmered invitingly on the stove as the mother of the family issued a poignant plea to her husband and six youngsters.

"We're having a beautiful dinner tonight...so would you please decide before coming to the table whether or not Hamlet is crazy?"

That's the kind of scholarly and happy home environment Sister Jane Frances recalls from her youthful days before entering religious life.

"We always had pitched battles at mealtime, all literary ones," she said. "My mother always worried that the neighbors would think we didn't get along."

On the contrary, this family that fought great literary battles nightly over the dining room table 'got along' just fine despite their differences of opinion and Sister Jane Frances laments the absence of this sort of old-fashioned close-knit togetherness in many families today.

"Everybody had to be at our dinner table for grace," she said. "I feel sorry for young people today who miss out on so much."

Probably the hardest thing for her to leave behind, those lively and unforgettable family dinner discussions were missed after she entered the cloistered life of a nun. The loneliness of separation from the family she loved so well, however, was lightened by occasional trips they made here to see her. On occasions, in fact, her father even lectured at the Cardome School.

Asked why she chose to become a nun, Sister Jane Frances replied, haltingly "Well, I don't know. I don't think any of us know that...It was just always in my mind as I grew up. I think maybe it's inborn because I always knew I wanted to be a nun. It always appealed to me."

Asked then whether she is happy with her choice, her answer this time flows unhesitatingly and with an eagerness that lights up her face; "Oh, Supremely!" she replies. "Oh yes, I should say so! I've never had one moment of doubt."

Another subject besides her family and her religious lifestyle that is guaranteed to light up Sister's face is Shakespeare, or Milton, or Dickens, or Thackeray, or any number of French authors.

A teacher of English and French from the time she joined the

Visitation of Holy Mary Order until the school closed in 1969 she believes that enthusiasm is essential for those in the teaching profession. So is a love for the subject being taught and a love for the people, as well as a sense of humor. "I think it is important to a teacher to love what you teach, and I do. I've loved it and lived it and I've tried to instill a love for the classics in my students."

The religious life also seemed to run in her family with, first cousins included, some 13 of them choosing it as a career. "My mother was not a Catholic, yet she gave three of her children for service in the church."

All of her siblings having predeceased her, she had this comment: "I'm the last one. They all always said I'd never live to womanhood because I was so frail and yet, I'm the only one left."

Sister Jane Frances recalled from the days of growing up in her journalist father's household one particularly fond 'family joke': "Because he was a critic my father was always given two tickets for the best seats in the house to Shakespearean performances or whatever was appearing; so we always ended up with two of his daughters seated in style in box seats while a third one sat up in the quarter gallery.

She had an equal love for drama; she would direct 'tableaux', designing and sewing most of the costumes; and recitals with dramatic readings, poetry and music. She spoke fluent French, and taught that subject as well as Latin, English and literature in the early years of the school. Though she may have assigned others to teach Latin and French, she never gave up her instructions in Literature.

Eventually, Sister Jane Frances became a teaching Principal of the school and became very well known and respected. She always felt that, because of her duties and responsibilities to the academy, she was a non-candidate for the office of Mother Superior. But such was not the case. She was first elected Mother Superior in 1940, a term which lasts three years.

One great honor paid to Sister Jane Frances was in 1974 when she was made a "Kentucky Colonel". The following is taken from a newspaper column, written by Si Cornell regarding this tribute, under the heading:

A Superior Kentucky Colonel

Becoming a Kentucky Colonel isn't much news, except--well read on.

Cardome Visitation Monastery, about 75 miles down I-75, is a beautiful place atop a hill near Georgetown, Kentucky.

The headquarters building once was the mansion of James Robinson, chosen as the Confederate Governor of Kentucky during the Civil War. It was a rather empty title, Kentucky never seceding from the Union, and therefore a Confederate governor had few official duties.

Nearly 80 years now, nuns of the Visitation Order have operated Cardome. Most of that time it was a 'finishing school' (high school) for young ladies of fine families. Cardome had students from 15 states and several foreign countries.

In recent years, Cardome was converted into a Montessori School for talented younger children, and a residence for elderly women.

Boss of all this activity is an unusual woman, Mother Jane Frances. I am privileged to have known Mother Jane. She was a tiny woman, not much over 80 pounds unless she wore a heavy rosary. She never raised her voice, in anger or rebuke, but she had the sort of eyeballs that could glow or freeze. Usually, she was both most gentle and most practical. For 31 years she was the directress and disciplinarian for Cardome's girls. She used her eyes and that quiet voice with an edge on it that could stop a motorcycle gang fight.

For 44 years, she was Mother Superior. Her order grants only three year terms at that capacity, with a limit of two terms in succession. Mother Jane served six years at least seven times, meaning there also have been 21 years when she did some other job. That's a lot of work!

A dear family friend once said, "Think of all the high school girls down the years, who changed from giggles into ladies. Think of the present little children just beginning to examine this world. Think of a lifetime of problems solved, especially when the problems belonged to others, not Mother Jane." This describes her best.

The Visitation Order now was beginning its 100th year in Kentucky when somebody decided Mother Jane should be a Kentucky Colonel. After all, people so honored are supposed to have done something for the Commonwealth, and Mother Jane certainly qualified, even if she didn't bet horses and swizzle mint juleps.

On June 23, 1974, no less than ex-Governor A. B. "Happy" Chandler appeared at Cardome to do the honors.

"Fifty-two years ago, I had a girl friend in school here," said Happy. "The girl insisted I come to Cardome and meet Mother Jane Frances. I did and I have been in love with her ever since."

Congressman John Breckenridge also sent these words: "Your complete dedication, your personal leadership, and your ideals in the field of education have greatly enriched the State of Kentucky, and have more than earned the tribute paid."

I asked Mother Jane's niece [Jane Blakely Woodrough] what her reply had been after all of these nice things had been said about her, and she said, "You know how she is. Whatever it was, it was only a few words and so quiet nobody could hear it."

Okay, Mother Jane hasn't changed any, but I think the Kentucky Colonels, from this time forward, best mind their manners.

Sister Jane Frances always had a dream of traveling to France and visiting the Motherhouse in Annacy, where the Visitation Order was founded in 1610. Being a nun, and having taken the vow of poverty, it was just a dream. But in 1977, the Alumnae Association presented her with an all expenses paid trip to Annacy, to honor her Iron Jubilee, 65 years since she took her vows as a Bride of Christ. The following year, at the age of 93, Mother Jane Frances Blakely and one of the "out" sisters, traveled to Annacy, France and what stories she told about her trip when she returned. Regretfully, none were recorded but I did hear one about her electric toothbrush that decided to begin operations while stowed overhead, causing a bit of a commotion and drawing attention to the two traveling nuns!

On January 22, 1981, this diminutive and quietly powerful Visitation nun, Sister Jane Frances [nee Susan Haughton Blakely] was called to take her place among the heavenly hosts. Of her death was written:

Although Sister Jane Frances' roles in Cardome's active apostolates made her a legend, her work as Mother Superior and as a contemplative nun whose main vocation was that of prayer, were the real marks of Sister Jane Frances. She led the convent through crisis after crisis in a calm, resolute and undaunted manner, which brought her the admiration of bishop after bishop.

Her friends were many and varied, representing many religious persuasions. Among them was A. B. 'Happy' Chandler, the late Colonel Harland Sanders, of Kentucky Fried Chicken fame, and Congressman John Breckenridge.

The Most Rev. Bishop of the Diocese of Covington, William A. Hughes, officiated at her Requiem Mass, assisted by retired Bishop, Most Rev. Richard Ackerman. Other concelebrants included Monsignor Leonard Nienaber, Rev. James R. O'Rourke and Monsignor Charles Murphy of Cincinnati.

Bishop Ackerman discussed Sister Jane Frances as he had come to know her over the past 20 years. "She was a woman who loved God very much. She left no worldly goods, but oh, what a legacy she left to us all. She left behind an example of tremendous worth."

While she was drawn to the Visitation Order because of its strict cloister and the "mountaintop top it offered to her to seek the hidden life in Christ," she was also drawn to it because of her own intellectuality and her desire to be involved in Christian education. "She entered the Visitation at a time when it was recognized as one of the great teaching communities of the church."

"Sister Jane Frances understood her vocation to become a saint. She fulfilled the statement of St. Francis deSales, founder of the Visitations, that 'the measure of love is love without measure.' A gentle lady, knowledgeable, well disciplined and genteel, will be in the everlasting hills of God as a true friend and as true a mother as she ever was."

She was the great aunt of the author and was called "Aunt Sue". She had only to walk into a room full of chattering girls and the room would fall silent, anticipating or perhaps fearing, what words she would speak to us. She never raised her voice above a whisper, and only had to say "I am so disappointed in you" and the effect was devastating. The crestfallen adolescent would redouble efforts to remove the disappointment and regain the approval of this saintly woman.



MARY LOUISE RUDD BLAKELY



The fifth child to bless the household of Laurie John and Lilly [Lendrum] Blakely was another daughter, Mary Louise Rudd Blakely. Born on August 18, 1886 and named for her Aunt, Mary Louise Ryan. The inscription in the family bible, made by her father, reads in part:

".... was born in Covington, Ky. at No. 1509 Madison Avenue, on Wednesday August 18th, 1886 at six o'clock and twenty-five minutes, a.m. Baptized by Very Rev'd. L. M. Lambert at the Cathedral, Covington, September 5th, 1886. Sponsors, William M. Piatt and Mary Louise Ryan."

Mary Louise attended the same schools as her sisters, and joined in the lively discussions around the family dinner table. But unlike her two older sisters, she did not join the convent, but chose to remain at home with her parents.

On May 1, 1918, a year after the death of her father, Mary Louise became the bride of Louis Carroll Baldwin in a quiet ceremony at St. Mary's Cathedral in Covington. Her brother, Rev. Paul Blakely, traveled from New York to perform the ceremony. Her only attendant was a sister of the groom, Miss Dixie Baldwin. The bride's brother, Laurie, acted as best man.

Louis Baldwin was 34 years old at the time of their wedding, and had been working for Standard Oil for a number of years, where he began as an office boy. Lewis and his bride went to Chicago to take up residence.

On February 14, 1919, Louis and Mary Louise became the parents of a son, whom they named Louis Carroll Baldwin, Jr. As an adult Lou, Jr. would become a published author of many religious and political articles.

Five years later, Louis and Mary Louise added another son to their family. Born on March 1, 1924, they named their second son John Lendrum Baldwin.

Louis Baldwin continued to work for the Standard Oil Company, and when he

retired after 50 years with the company, he was the Chief Purchasing Agent. He died in September 1962, at the age of 78.

Mary Louise [Blakely] Baldwin survived her husband four years, and died on November 16, 1966.

Regretfully, this is a short biography for a delightful lady, but there is little information in the files.¹⁵



**Mary Louise [Blakely] Baldwin
c. 1940**

¹⁵ Ed. note: I met "Aunt Weese" several times, when I was very young, and I remember the delightful visits and laughter when she would come to see her sister, Susan (Sister Jane Frances) at Cardome, when I was a student there. LWS)

LAURIE ALOYSIUS RUFFNER BLAKELY



The last inscription in the Blakely family Bible reads:

Laurie Aloysius Ruffner Blakely, sixth child and son of Laurie J. Blakely and Lilly, his wife, was born at Harris Street (Ninth St.), Newport, Ky. on Thursday April 26th at fifteen minutes before five o'clock p.m., A. D. 1894. Baptized by Rev. Fr. Meisman, Rector at St. Stephens Church, Newport. Sponsors, Victor M. O'Shaughnassey and Effie V. Ryan.

Laurie attended the local schools and received the same good Catholic education and upbringing as his older brothers and sisters.

About 1919, while visiting his sister, Susan, at the convent in Georgetown, Kentucky, he met a student there named Frances Shouse, from Lexington, Kentucky.

On November 20, 1920, Laurie A. Blakely and Frances Shouse were married in Lexington, Kentucky; the exact location of the church is unknown.

In 1922, at the time of his mother's death, Laurie and Frances were living in Covington, and Laurie was the advertising manager for a local gas and electric appliance company. They later moved to Lexington, where Laurie continued his career in advertising.

They bought a beautiful old house on a farm on the outskirts of Lexington, and called it "Windward." They were both avid readers and together, they collected a large library, taking up a full room in their "Windward" home.

Frances and Laurie were never blessed with children of their own, but welcomed into their hearts and homes many nieces and nephews. In the mid-1970's, finding the requirements and duties of keeping up their large home and farm too much, they sold "Windward" and moved closer to downtown Lexington, into a lovely brick, ranch-style home.

As inconceivable as it may seem, with two sisters and a brother in service to God and the church, Laurie renounced his faith and became an agnostic. This was a cross his sister, Susan, bore silently in her heart the rest of her life.

On December 29, 1971, after celebrating their fifty-second Christmas together, Laurie Blakely died. His funeral was held at Milward Funeral home in Lexington, Kentucky.

Frances Shouse Blakely survived her husband almost 12 years, and continued to live at the home they had shared the last years of his life. At the age of 83 years and one month, she died on December 6, 1983, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Lexington blessed with the sanctity of the last sacraments. Her funeral Mass was held at her parish church, Christ the King, and she was laid to rest in hallowed ground.



Frances [Shouse] and Laurie Blakely

Laurie Blakely was the youngest child of Laurie John and Lilly [Lendrum] Blakely and with his brief history the story of the sixth child of James and Susanna ends. It was a remarkable family and I am proud to have known and loved them.

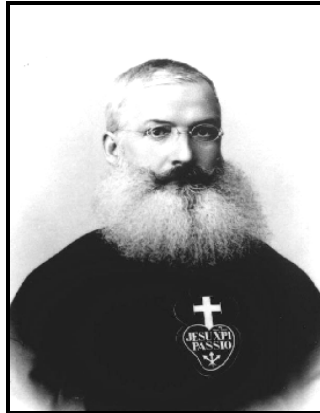
Alice Theresa blakely

The next child of James and Susanna Blakely was named Alice Theresa

Alice Theresa Blakely, the eighth child of James and Susanna, was born on May 29th, 1849, and baptized at St. Paul's in Pittsburgh on the 1st of June 1849.

This child was unknown until receiving the baptismal records from the Diocese of Pittsburgh in 1998. Alice was not listed in the census of 1850, presumably she died in infancy.

Joseph M. Blakely



The ninth and second youngest child of James and Susanna [Smyth] Blakely was Joseph Miriam Blakely. Joseph was born the 19th of May 1847 and baptized on the 23rd of May at St. Paul's Church in Pittsburgh. Joseph studied for the priesthood and was ordained on April 18, 1870 in Hichester, Maryland. At his ordination he took the name "Father Aloysius". I will let the article, published in the *Catholic Telegraph* in 1912 speak to the life of this holy man.

DEATH OF REV. A. BLAKELY, C. P.

The Distinguished Passionist Was Well Known in America and Europe
Rev. Aloysius Blakely, one of the best known members of the Passionist Order, and former Vicar-General of Bulgaria, died at the Passionist Monastery in Dunkirk, N. Y., October 31. Father Blakely was a member of a family distinguished for its service to Church and Country. His great grandfather, Simon Ruffner, with his two brothers Christian and George Ruffner, gave in 1787 to Father Carroll, afterward first Bishop of the United States, the first piece of property owned by the church west of the Allegheny Mountains. The family originally settled in Brooke Co., Va.¹⁶ where Father Blakely was born May 17, 1848. He was one of a family of thirteen children, of whom but one survives, Mr. Laurie J. Blakely, well-known journalist and for many years editor of the Commercial Tribune of this city.

¹⁶ The information that Joseph was "born in Brooke Co., Va." is wrong. He, as the others, was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The future priest was baptized Joseph Mary and at the early age of fifteen, he entered the Passionist Order at Pittsburgh, and on his reception was given the name of Aloysius. After his profession, he was sent to the House of Studies of the order at Hichester, Md. and was ordained April 18, 1870 by Bishop Becker of Wilmington. For a time he was Master of Novices at the motherhouse, then he was made Rector of the Sacred Heart Retreat at Louisville, later serving in the same capacity at Hoboken. In 1895 the condition of the church in Bulgaria, because of the persecution of the Turks, needed a man able to cope with the situation, and the Passionist Superior General selected Father Aloysius for the work. He was appointed Vicar-General to the Bishop and for 10 years labored in that country, which is now attracting so much attention in its war with its hated and ancient foe. With Bishop Wigger of Newark, he later made a tour of the Holy Land and was one of a committee commissioned to bring about more humane treatment for the Christians from the Turk. His mission bore fruit. His tact was almost equal to his kindness; he won his enemies for friends. He was then appointed by his Superior to collect for the church in Bulgaria, and in this capacity he visited Mexico and the principal cities of the United States.

But the work had been too severe, and his health gave way. Three years ago he went to the Baltimore Monastery to recuperate, and last March he entered St. Agnes Hospital, where an operation was performed on him. About six weeks ago he went to Dunkirk, somewhat improved, as it was thought, but it was only the shifting of the clouds before the sunset; and on the Vigil of All Saints he rested from his labors. The funeral was held at Dunkirk last Monday morning.

His passing is widely mourned, for in his day he was one of the most prominent of the missionaries of his Order, and going from one end of the country to the other in performance of his duty, he made friends everywhere. His family connections were also large and, in the various branches, distinguished for their devotion to religion. Counting only from his own generation, twenty-two of his relatives have entered the service of God in the religious life. A sister became a Benedictine nun, and died Prioress of the convent in Nebraska City, Nebraska; one of his nieces is Madame Ryan, a Religious of the Sacred Heart; another niece, Sister Jane Frances Blakely, is a member of the Visitation Order at Cardome, Georgetown, Ky. and last summer his nephew, Paul L. Blakely, S. J., was ordained at St. Louis. A cousin is the well-known temperance worker, Very Rev. Dr. Lambing, of Pennsylvania.

Father Blakely was noted for his eloquence, and his missionary work

was highly successful. He served his Order and the Church well and faithfully during the fifty years of his religious life, and without doubt is now enjoying the blessedness prepared by the Lord for those who are faithful in the place assigned to them. To his brother, Mr. Blakely, the CATHOLIC TELEGRAPH extends its sympathy in this latest of the many bereavements he has so lately been called upon to bear."

Virginia Rose

Virginia Rose Blakely was the last child to enter the household and lives of James and Susanna [Smyth] Blakely.

Virginia Rose was born on March 3, 1852. Four days later, on March 7, she was baptized at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Little Virginia graced their home just four short years. She contracted the croup and died on December 6, 1856. She was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery in the Lawrenceville suburb of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The land struggle

James B. and Susanna [Smyth] Blakely were a remarkable couple with an equally remarkable family of eight accomplished children. But the story of James and his family would not be complete if we did not touch on what is called the "land struggle," that persisted for three generations!

James Blakely filed bankruptcy in 1857, a result of the great panic of that year. He voluntarily assigned all of his holdings to John J. Mitchell (eldest son of his brother in law), who acted as trustee. But, for some unknown reason J. J. Mitchell resigned and the District Court appointed William Campbell to take over as trustee, and therein-lay part of the problem. James was a resident of Pittsburgh at the time and the papers of assignment were filed in the court there, but most of his lands and city lots were in several different states and territories; therein lays the rest of the problem!

The land dispute seems to have begun in 1885, three years after James Blakely died and 28 years after his bankruptcy, when Mr. William Stahl purchased 160 acres of land in Minnesota that had belonged originally to James Blakely, sold in 1861 by William Campbell, trustee, to a man named William Badger who held the land until his death in the late 1880's when it was sold to William G. Stahl. While Stahl's attorney was examining the title, he questioned the validity of Campbell's appointment by the court, therefore filed a suit against the original trustee, J. J. Mitchell, and all of the Blakely heirs, seeking to get a "quiet title" to the property. It's likely he wanted a quitclaim deed from the Blakelys in order to perfect the chain of ownership. Essentially, the suit questioned the jurisdiction of Pennsylvania courts over lands in other states.

The case went to trial and ended with a verdict in favor of the plaintiff, Stahl, but the Blakely defendants appealed for a new trial. At the second trial, the Blakely defendants won. The family had visions of recovering some of the large tracts of land their father had once owned, now worth considerably more than when it was sold to pay his creditors years before. Laurie Blakely, son of James and a practicing attorney at the time, traveled to Minnesota and located all of the property. In a summary letter to the other family members he announced that they would recover "millions"! Stahl, in the meantime, appealed the decision to the Supreme Court of Minnesota where, in 1889, Stahl was again victorious. So the vision of millions evaporated into thin air and the story ended? No.

In January 1894, five years after the Stahl decision by the Supreme Court of Minnesota, the Blakely heirs, with Lavinia [Blakely] Wimmer as their "leader" (likely because her son was the District Attorney), again tried their hand at recovering some compensation for the valuable lands given up by their father, James Blakely. This time the Blakely heirs hired an attorney in East Liverpool,

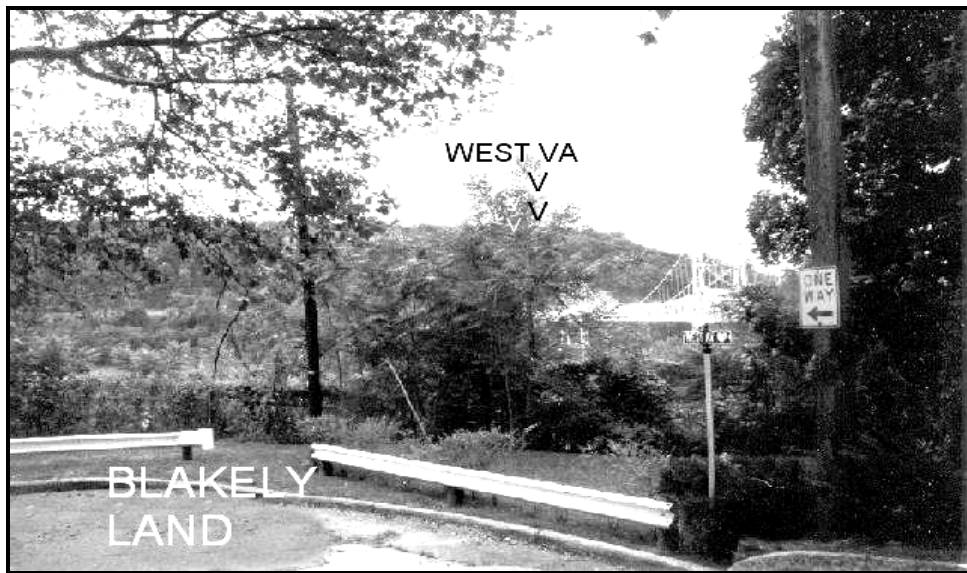
Ohio, and had him send notices to every individual owning city lots and lands once owned by James Blakely, questioning the validity of Campbell's (the second trustee) appointment. The lots in question covered a large area of the business center, and the inference of a lawsuit so long after the fact caused quite a stir in the town of East Liverpool. Huge articles appeared on the front pages of their local newspapers and the town talked of nothing else for several months. Finally, towards the fall of that year, 1894, this, too, came to an end - NOT favorable to the Blakely heirs. Sebastian Wimmer sent a copy of a letter received by his son Ernest, attorney at law, to his sister-in-law, Mary Louise Ryan. The letter was from the attorney they had hired in East Liverpool and it said in part - "the case is at an end."

And, so ends another vision of recovering millions. Well, if not millions, at least a nice piece of change! End of story? Well..... no, not quite.

The Blakely heirs give up on the vast lands and city lots once owned by James, but in 1902 or so, a bridge company came to East Liverpool and wanted to construct another bridge across the Ohio river between East Liverpool and Newall, West Virginia. In order to do this, it would be necessary to use part of the old town cemetery and some graves would have to be moved. Wait a minute! The cemetery land was given by the Blakelys to the town of East Liverpool and was to be a cemetery forever. The bridge company wished to pay the Blakely heirs a small amount for the land they needed; (the cemetery was no longer accepting new burials). Once again the Blakely heirs saw an opportunity for compensation for their father's loss. They noted that when the land was given it had a stipulation (no documentation of this has been found) that it would revert to the heirs if "ever used for anything other than a cemetery." The cemetery was already closed and most of the graves moved, but only when the bridge company became interested did the Blakely heirs see their chance. They decided that the town would have to return this valuable tract to the Blakely heirs. (In fact the land was on the outskirts of town, was a steep and eroding hill with little value to anyone except the bridge company that needed a place to anchor.) The Blakelys refused the offer from the bridge company, which eventually negotiated with the town for the parcel they wanted and once again the Blakely heirs were disappointed. The bridge was constructed, and now even a highway has eaten away most of the two acres of ground that once held the mortal remains of the long-dead ancestors of many. What little is left today is not much more than a green area, which the locals call Skeleton Park, because of the few graves still there. The Blakely heirs never received a dime.

Out of curiosity, Stephens Blakely Woodrough, a fourth generation Blakely heir, and his wife, Margot, traveled to East Liverpool, Ohio in 1998. Together with their daughter Page and son-in-law Mark McDermott, they walked the bridge and visited Skeleton Park, the cemetery land donated so long ago to the early town of East Liverpool. They walked around downtown, taking pictures and asking questions. Perhaps it was best that the activities of the prior generations of Blakely heirs were forgotten. Otherwise, it is questionable if this generation of Blakelys would have been so graciously received when they breezed into town that cool, fall day.

Yes, they lost everything in the crash of 1857, as did many people. And yes, the Blakely heirs did stir things up a bit forty years later. But for all the good that was done by James and John Simpson Blakely they should always be remembered. Moreover, the bankruptcy and all the attempts at land reclamation attempted over the years produced records that caused the life of James and Susan Blakely to become accessible to the present family. Recently, their bankruptcy papers along with a full inventory of their immense land holdings; home and office were found stashed in the attic at Beechwood. The family papers and memorabilia now rest in quiet peace in the Ohio Historical Association in Columbus, Ohio. The curator, Bill Gates, was absolutely thrilled to receive this tiny fragment of early history. As family, we are delighted that more than a hundred years later this Blakely family is finding a proper place in the early fabric of East Liverpool, Ohio as well as Pittsburgh and St. Marys, Pennsylvania.



This picture was taken in 1998. The Blakely land is on a bluff overlooking the Ohio River. The Newall Bridge connects Ohio and West Virginia. The construction of the bridge in the early 20th century raised the Blakely family hopes of recovering either money or property.

CHAPTER III

ALICE BLAKELY

and

CALVIN DODGE, her husband

and their children

ALICE BLAKELY

Alice, the third child of our matriarch Sarah [Haughton] Blakely, was born in Lancashire County, England on December 1, 1810. For many years, Alice was an unknown sister having never been mentioned in any of the writings or memoirs of the descendants of her brothers, James and John. She was discovered in 1998 when baptismal and marriage records were received from the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Alice was just a little girl of eight when she arrived in America with her mother, Sarah, and brothers, James, William and John. What a frightening journey that must have been for a child so young!

Admittedly, little is known about the daughter, Alice, her husband and children. What is included in this book was taken from records received from the Diocese of Pittsburgh, newspaper clippings, census records and information supplied by a descendant of one of her children, John K. Hayes.

Alice converted to the Catholic faith and was baptized at St. Patrick's Church in Pittsburgh on July 20, 1828, the same day as her brother, John. The church record said she was sixteen years old and an Anabaptist convert, but she was actually seventeen at the time.

Four years later, on the 27th of November 1832, Alice became the bride of Calvin Dodge, at St. Patrick's Church in Pittsburgh, her aunt and uncle, James and Susanna Blakely, as her witnesses.

According to the 1837 Business Directory of Pittsburgh, Calvin Dodge had a dry goods and grocery store on 5th Street, between Wood and Smithfield, in Pittsburgh.

By 1850, Alice and Calvin were the parents of six children. The census of that year lists Calvin, age 41 his occupation given as painter and his skill level as "skilled-construction," his estate valued at \$4500. ; his place of birth as Connecticut. Alice, age 38 and the children: Mary, age 15; James, age 13; John, 8; Francis, 6 and Alice, age 2. Also living in the household is the matriarch, Sarah Blakely, age 70.

Missing from this census is their daughter, Sarah Ann Dodge, born June 29, 1840 and baptized July 22, 1840 with John Michel (pronounced Mitchell) and Sarah Blakely, her grandmother, as sponsors. It is, therefore, presumed that this child died in infancy.

The 1860 census of Pittsburgh shows Calvin has aged only six year in a ten-year period, and Alice has aged nine years. In fact, they are both forty-seven.¹⁷ Calvin's

¹⁷ This was a common phenomena usually caused by a guess from the person supplying the information.

occupation was 'master painter' with a skill level as "master craftsman."¹⁸

Also listed in the household, 1860 census of Pittsburgh:

James B. Dodge, his age given as 22 and his occupation as salesman, peddler.

John C. Dodge, age given as 16. He, too, worked as a salesman, peddler.

Francis W., age given as 14.

Alice, age 11

Ellen, age 7.

The family appeared to be doing well, financially and a domestic was employed in the household to assist Alice in caring for her large family. Tragically, in May of 1863, Calvin Dodge drowned in the Monongahela River, leaving a young widow and several children still at home.

The following article appeared in *The Daily Pittsburgh Gazette*, Monday, May 25, 1863:

DEATH BY DROWNING

On Sunday afternoon, between two and three o'clock, a party of young men, in rowing a skiff on the Monongahela River, in the vicinity of the Brownsville wharf boat, discovered the body of a man floating or rather lying near the stern of the steamer "Gallatin". The body was hauled ashore, when a crowd soon collected, but no one knew who the deceased was until John J. Mitchell,¹⁹ Esq., came up and identified the remains as those of Calvin Dodge, a well known citizen of the Eighth Ward. The body was then removed to the coffin rooms of Mr. Devore, on Grant Street, where an inquest was held by Coroner McClung. No evidence was elicited tending to show how the deceased lost his life, and a verdict of "death by drowning" was rendered. The deceased was a very worthy and esteemed citizen, and carried on the business of painting---his office being located on Fourth Street. We learned that he left his residence, on Forbes street, about eight o'clock on Wednesday evening last, not advising his family as to where he was going, or what his intentions were. As he frequently lay on the sofa all night, in warm weather, no search was made for him until Thursday, when it was found that he had not been in the house during the night. Enquiries were then made in every direction, but no tidings were heard of him until his remains were found as stated. He was about fifty-five years of age, and was a very industrious and useful citizen.

A brief notice in the same newspaper said this:

DODGE--On Thursday, May 21st, CALVIN DODGE, age 55 years

¹⁸ He was a painter of houses and buildings, not portraits.

¹⁹ John J. Mitchell was a family member mentioned elsewhere in this book.

The funeral will take place this afternoon at 2 o'clock from his former residence, 86 Forbes Street. The friends of the family are respectfully invited to attend without further notice.

The census of 1870 listed the son, James Blakely Dodge, as head of household, and the mother, Alice, as keeping house. The rest of the household, in 1870 was: John C., age 26, brother, occupation given as Wall Paper Dealer, with a skill level as entrepreneur, merchant.

Ella, age 18, sister

Alice Adams, age 24, sister

Nora McGowen, a domestic

The 1880 census of Pittsburgh, enumerated in June of that year, showed James, the son, age now 38, head of the household and owner of a bookstore.

Alice, now 68, widowed; and Ella, age 24.

Alice [Blakely] Dodge spent the last years of her life at the home of her daughter. Her nephew, Sebastian Wimmer, kept a daily diary and on March 1, 1901, he wrote:

Old Mrs. Dodge died at 7.40 a.m. today. 90 years old, at the house of her daughter Mrs. Alice McFadden in Washington, DC. She was the sister of James Blakely, my father in law, who died at St. Mary's in 1882.

Alice [Blakely] Dodge was buried at Congressional Cemetery in Washington, D. C. following her funeral Mass, held at St. Stephen's Church. She was buried in the same lot as her son-in-law, William H. McFadden.

The children of Calvin and Alice [Blakely] Dodge were:

- 1. Mary Elizabeth**
- 2. James Blakely**
- 3. Sarah Ann**
- 4. John Calvin**
- 5. William Francis**
- 6. Alice Rose**
- 7. Helen Faith**

MARY ELIZABETH DODGE

The first child of Calvin and Alice [Blakely] Dodge was Mary Elizabeth, born on January 12, 1836 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Mary Elizabeth was baptized at St. Paul's Church on March 6, 1836 with Joanne and Ophelia Timmon as sponsors.

Mary was listed in the household of her parents in the 1850 census of Pittsburgh, but not in the 1860 census. It is presumed that she married about 1856.

According to information received from John K. Hayes, she married a man named Curley. They lived in Des Moines, Iowa for a period of time, then moved to the Chicago area. She was buried at Calvary Cemetery in Evanston, Illinois.

JAMES BLAKELY DODGE

The second child and first son of Calvin and Alice [Blakely] Dodge was born December 18, 1837. Named James Blakely to honor his uncle, he was baptized at St. Paul's Church with the honored uncle, James Blakely and grandmother, Sarah Blakely as the child's sponsors.

In the 1850 census of Pittsburgh, James lived with his parents, age given as 13. In 1860, he still lived with his parents at 86 Forbes Street and worked as a salesman, peddler. Following the death of his father in 1863, James Blakely Dodge took over as head of household, and provided for his widowed mother, his brother, John and sisters, Ella and Alice.

James was an active member of his community, serving as a Director of the Catholic Library as well as a member of the Lecture Committee in 1866 and 1867. James was among the early members of the "Young Men's Catholic Association," an organization in which Bishop O'Connor took great pride.

In 1880 James lived at 86 Forbes Street in Pittsburgh, the home his parents shared for thirty-one years. He was the proprietor of a bookstore, unmarried, and lived with his mother and younger sister, Ella.

James Blakely Dodge died on March 19, 1895. His uncle, Sebastian Wimmer made this entry in his diary:

March 25th--At 12.15 p.m. news reached Sue (Blakely) from Eva in Washington City, that James B. Dodge died on St. Joseph's Day, 19th inst., at 6.30 p.m. Funeral from his late residence No. 303 Dinwiddle Str., Pittsburgh at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 23, 1895.

SARAH ANN DODGE

As previously mentioned, Sarah Ann Dodge was born June 29, 1840 and baptized at St. Paul's Church in Pittsburgh on July 22, 1840. This daughter of Calvin and Alice Dodge was not mentioned in the 1850 census of Pittsburgh. This likely means she died in infancy.

JOHN CALVIN DODGE

The fourth child and second son of Calvin and Alice [Blakely] Dodge was John Calvin, born October 23, 1842 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. John was baptized at St. Paul's Church on January 29, 1843 with James and Catherine McGuinness as his sponsors.

John was living with his parents and family in both the 1850 and 1860 census of Pittsburgh. He was working as a salesman in 1860, at the age of 17.

By 1870 the census of Pittsburgh listed John C. as a wallpaper dealer with a skill level as entrepreneur and merchant. Apparently, his life and career ended while he was quite young, as there is no record of him in the 1880 census.

Information received from John Hayes stated he had a funeral card in his archives. It is unknown if John Calvin Dodge married or not, and his exact date of death has not been determined as of this writing.

WILLIAM FRANCIS DODGE

William Francis Dodge, the fifth child and third son of Calvin and Alice [Blakely] Dodge, was born April 8, 1845 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was baptized at St. Paul's Cathedral on May 11, 1845 with James Blakely and Catherine McCauley as his sponsors. The baptismal record of this child was the only one that indicated his father, Calvin Dodge, was Protestant.

William Francis was listed as Francis in the 1850 census of Pittsburgh, and Francis W. in 1860.

The John Hayes information indicated that Francis moved to Des Moines, Iowa and married a local girl by the name of Jane or Jennie Kelly. Nothing more is known at this time.

ALICE ROSE DODGE

Alice Rose Dodge, the sixth child and third daughter of Calvin and Alice [Blakely] Dodge, was born on August 8, 1848 and baptized the same day, according to the Diocese of Pittsburgh baptismal record. Nathaniel McCauley and Sarah Ann Blakely, her aunt, were the sponsors of Alice Rose when she was baptized at St. Paul's Cathedral, in Pittsburgh.

Alice Rose lived with her parents and family, probably at 68 Forbes Street in Pittsburgh. She was listed in the 1850 and 1860 census; the family lived in Ward 8.

Sometime between the census of 1860 and that taken in 1870, Alice Rose married a gentleman from Birmingham, Alabama by the name of Adams, his given name unknown. Since the War Between the States was raging from 1861 to 1865, we can only guess about what happened to the first husband of Alice Rose.

The 1870 census of Pittsburgh, Ward 8, found Alice Adams in the household of her widowed mother, two brothers and a sister. By the census of 1880, Alice was gone. It is presumed that Alice moved to the vicinity of Washington, D. C. sometime before 1880, where she met and married William H. McFadden.

William McFadden lived with his widowed mother, Ellen McFadden at 1245 E street southeast according to the 1880 census of Washington, D. C. His occupation was given as printer and his age 26.

Alice Rose [Dodge] Adams and William H. McFadden were married, probably in Washington, D. C. around 1884, and they were the parents of three children. Their first child, a daughter they named Stella Rose, was born November 17, 1885. From a newspaper clipping of her death, we know Stella Rose was married to Mr. Bernard Focke when she died July 27, 1912 in Washington, D. C. Her funeral Mass was held at St. Martin's Church and she was buried at Congressional Cemetery.

The second child of William and Alice McFadden was a son they named William James. He was born March 20, 1887 in Washington, D. C. and died August 2, 1887, in Thoroughfare, Virginia. William James McFadden was buried at Congressional Cemetery in Washington, D. C.

The last child born to William and Alice [Dodge] McFadden was another son, Arthur McFadden. Arthur was born in November 1891.

Tragically, William H. McFadden died on October 23, 1892 at the age of 38. He was buried at Congressional Cemetery. In the 1900 census of Washington, D. C. Alice [Dodge] McFadden lived at 715 24th Street, northwest. Included in the household were her son, Arthur age 9, her daughter, Stella age 15, her mother Alice Dodge, age 91 and her sister, Ella age 48 and single.

Alice [Dodge] McFadden, widowed while still very young, the loss of her second child at the age of four months, followed four years later by the sudden death of her second husband, must have been a woman of strong character. We can only presume that, with the help of her sister, Ella, Alice [Dodge] McFadden successfully raised her son, Arthur McFadden.

Of this family, the ending is yet to be written. Though records have been scoured, no date of death was found for Alice [Dodge] McFadden.

HELEN FAITH DODGE

The last child and fourth daughter of Calvin and Alice [Blakely] Dodge was born September 16, 1852, and baptized Helen Faith on October 3, 1852 at St. Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her uncle, James Blakely and Catherine McGuinness were her sponsors.

Helen Faith Dodge grew up in her parents home on Forbes Street in Pittsburgh, where she was found in all of the census records, up to and including the census of 1880. Probably, following the death of her brother, James B. Dodge in 1895, "Ella" and her mother sold the house on Forbes Street and moved in with her sister, Alice McFadden in Washington, D. C.

Apparently, "Ella" Dodge never married, and what became of her is still unknown.

CHAPTER IV

JOHN SIMPSON BLAKELY

And

JEMIMA CECELIA FORTUNE, his wife

And their children

JOHN SIMPSON BLAKELY



c. 1830

John Simpson Blakely was born in England about 1812 and accompanied his mother, Sarah [Haughton] Blakely and siblings, James, William and Alice to America in September of 1819. The arrival date is reflected in the applications for naturalization filed by his brothers. John would have been about eight years old when he arrived in America.

Nothing is known about John's education. We do not know whether he ever received formal schooling, where he might have received such training, or when and how long he continued his education. We do know, however, that it was customary in the early nineteenth century to apprentice children, including the very young children who were only eight years of age.

John, like his mother, brother and sister, was an "Anabaptist" convert, and he, too, studied the doctrines of the Catholic faith. On the 20th of July 1828, John and his sister, Alice, were baptized at St. Patrick Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His sponsors were his brother and sister-in-law, James and Susanna Blakely.

Unlike his two older brothers, John did not apply for naturalization in the District Court of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. We do not know why, or whether John made a voluntary decision not to apply for naturalization to become a citizen of the United States. It is unknown if he made application in his adopted state of Ohio.



Jemima Cecelia Fortune c. 1830

Sometime around 1831 John met Jemima Cecelia Fortune whom he would later marry. Jemima was the daughter of Walter Fortune and his second wife, Ann [Craft [Fortune. Her exact date of birth is unknown. Based on information gathered from census records, however, it appears she was about the same age as John.

John Simpson Blakely and Jemima Cecelia Fortune were married on August 22, 1833, at St. Patrick Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Luca and Francisca Fortune signed their names as witnesses to the event. John and Jemima established their home in the Pittsburgh area, where John was a merchant.

In 1837 John Simpson Blakely was elected to serve as a member of the Common Council, West Ward as listed in the 1837 Harris City Directory, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He retained this position until January 1838. In this same publication, John was listed as a Vice-President of The Pittsburgh Institute of Arts and Sciences, which was located at the corner of Fourth and Market Streets. The objects of this Institute “are to develop and render useful all subjects which may have a tendency to promote the cause of productive industry, and the mechanical

arts; and at the same time that the scientific principles which are so intimately connected therewith, are explained and diffused, that it may serve as a place of instruction and amusement, both to the young and old.”

The first child of John and Jemima [Fortune] Blakely was Mary Imogene, born in 1834. Called “Emma,” this child was born without the ability to hear, consequently was noted as “deaf and dumb” in the census records of her lifetime.

Shortly after the birth of their first child, John and Jemima Blakely left Pittsburgh and established a new home in East Liverpool, Ohio where they appear in the 1840 census for Columbiana County.

An article titled *St. Aloysius Church, East Liverpool*, written by Most Rev. James A. McFadden and published in *The March of the Eucharist* in 1951 reads as follows:

Through the kindness and generosity of John Blakely, a loyal Catholic and prominent local citizen in the village of East Liverpool, a large and spacious room in his home was made available for church services. It was in this room in 1834 that the Rev. James Conlan of Steubenville first administered spiritual guidance to the 10 Catholic families of the village. With few exceptions, the services continued to be held for the next sixteen years at this location. As early as 1837 Fr. Conlan had encouraged his parishioners to plan for the erection of a church. However, the panic of 1837 delayed its construction until aid was obtained from local and outside sources. The plans were realized in 1845 when the structure was completed. The joy of the parishioners was turned to sadness when, on Passion Sunday of that same year, a fire completely destroyed the structure. John Blakely helped to soften this demoralizing blow by again offering his home as a place of worship.

For John and his wife, Jemima, to provide their home as a place of worship, while they were raising their two small children, their home must have been of considerable size. A family descendant recalled that a particular sideboard (presumably located in the dining room) was used as an altar for the celebration of the Mass and that the same piece of furniture was used to administer the sacrament of Baptism to babies.



John Simpson Blakely c. 1855

In the census record of 1850, Columbiana County Liverpool Township Ohio, ten people shared John Simpson Blakely's home. The record, discovered in spite of the misspelled surname, showed:

**John Bleakley, 39, Potter, \$2000.; born-England
Jemima Bleakley, 39, born-Pennsylvania
Emma , 15, born-Pennsylvania; deaf and dumb.
Adelaide, 4, born-Ohio
James Bleakley, 7, born-Ohio [his son, Walter James]
Frances 8/12, born-Ireland [Error: born in Ohio]
Walter Fortune, 78, none, born-Pennsylvania [father of Jemima]
Ann Fortune, 74, born-Ireland [mother of Jemima]
Ann Fortune, 45, born-Pennsylvania [sister of Jemima]
James McNary, 12, born-Virginia [relationship not known]**

By the census of 1860, enumerated in June, East Liverpool, Columbiana County, Ohio, the family of John and Jemima Blakely included:

**Mary Imogene, age 34, born-Pennsylvania; dumb.
James W., age 17, born-Ohio
Ida E., age 14, born-Ohio
Frances M., age 10, born-Ohio**

The following is an excerpt from *History of Columbiana County, Ohio and Representative Citizens*, published in 1908 by Biographical Publishing Co., Chicago, on pg. 152, Famous Old Potters, continued:

Contemporaneously with the establishment of the Goodwin and Brunt enterprises came the birth of the famous firm of Woodward, Blakely & Company, accounted the wealthiest pottery of the day. Jabez Vodrey, one of the members of the firm, was the father of potting west of the Alleghenies. He [Vodrey] came to America from Staffordshire in 1827. In partnership with a man named Frost, he established a pottery in Pittsburgh in 1828. In 1830 he went to Louisville and built the first pottery in Kentucky, and in 1847 he came to East Liverpool and formed a partnership with John S. Blakely and William Woodward. Both Blakely and Woodward were large property owners in the town, which was beginning to feel an impetus from the new industry. The people looked on Blakely as a wealthy man. He and his brother [James] had come from Pittsburgh some years before and had interested themselves in developing real estate. The firm of John S. Blakely & Company had for some years done a large merchandising business, and the name gave an air of solidity to the new firm. The factory that was built in 1847-48 was an ambitious one, forming the nucleus for what was later the plants of Vodrey & Company, the William Brunt pottery and the East Liverpool pottery. The firm built three kilns, making the new works the most pretentious in town. The people believed now that a new era had dawned for the industry; had it not been for the series of '10 years' disasters that followed, beginning with the panic of the early '50's and ending with the Civil War, it is safe to say there would have been a story of substantial progress to tell, for the period that followed the establishment of the Brunts, Goodwin, the Harkers and the Woodward-Blakely firm in the earthenware business showed a spirit of enterprise on the part of the pioneers that, seen through the eyes of another century, was deserving of better results."

The following excerpt appears in the same publication, page 153, under the caption "The Hard Times of the '50's":

There are few stories of hardship and privation in the early manufacturing history of the Middle West that equal the experience through which East Liverpool passed during the middle '50's.

The revival of business came slowly. During these years Woodward, Blakely & Company had taken the contract to furnish the terra cotta decorations for the new St. Paul's Cathedral, then in course of erection in Pittsburgh, and were making a specialty of fine terra cotta. They filled the contract, making the new product at the western end of the works, but the venture resulted disastrously for the firm. They lost at least \$10,000.00 in the experiments, and this with the straitened conditions of general business, hastened their downfall. In 1857 Woodward, Blakely & Company assigned. The failure

coming on the heels of that of William G. Smith, gave the town another serious setback. John S. Blakely, who had only a few years before been credited with being the wealthiest man in town, lost all he had. He was, at the time, serving as postmaster under President Buchanan, and shortly after his term expired removed to St. Louis."

The foregoing excerpts accurately describe the rise and fall of the Blakely business concerns in East Liverpool, Ohio. Having lost everything, the family left East Liverpool in the early 1860's and moved to St. Louis, Missouri where John Simpson Blakely retired and later died.

The 1870 Census of St. Louis City, St. Louis County Missouri, enumerated in June, included the following notations:

**Blakely, John S., 56, retired merchant, value-\$5000., born in England.
Blakely, Jemima C., 56, keeping house, born England.
Blakely, Mary, 32, born Eng. [Error; Mary Imogene was born in Pennsylvania]
Frances, 19, teacher, born Ohio
Fortune, Mary, 54, born Pa. [Mary was Jemimas' spinster sister]**

John Simpson Blakely died in St. Louis, Missouri on February 12, 1877. The notice of his death that appeared in the local newspaper stated:

Blakely-Tuesday evening, Feb. 12th of congestive apoplexy. John S. Blakely, in his sixty-sixth year. Funeral services this (Thursday) morning at St. Malachi's church, corner of Summit and Clark Avenues at half past nine o'clock. Friends of his family, and of his son, Walter J. Blakely, are invited to attend.

John S. was buried at Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri on March 2, 1878.

When John died, Jemima's maiden sister, Mary Fortune, was still living in their home. It is not known who moved in with whom, but in 1880 Jemima and Mary Fortune lived in the household of Jemimas' son, Walter J. Blakely. Mary Fortune not only lived with John and Jemima and their son, Walter but she was also buried on the Blakely family lot at Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis.

Jemima Cecelia [Fortune] Blakely survived her husband 20 years and died on August 24, 1898. She was buried alongside her husband, John.



Jemima Cecelia [Fortune] Blakely²⁰

One of the streets in East Liverpool, Ohio is named “Blakely Street” and is located on a bluff that overlooks the eastern end of the city. The following entry, taken from *Street Names Reflect Heritage* by Joan Witt and published on the East Liverpool, Ohio website [www.eastliverpool.com/streetnames.htm] states:

“Blakely Street honors one of the early town mayors, John [S.] Blakely.”

We have no documentation of John Simpson Blakely ever having been elected Mayor of East Liverpool, other than this statement.

²⁰ Picture of John Simpson Blakely hanging on the wall and the “piecrust table” mentioned in a letter later in this book

MARY IMOGENE BLAKELY

Mary Imogene Blakely, the first child of John Simpson and Jemima [Fortune] Blakely, was born in 1834 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. "Emma," as she was called, was born deaf and was, therefore, noted as deaf and dumb on all census records of her lifetime. It appears that in spite of her handicap, she was an accomplished writer.

Little more is known of Emma, but her brief obituary gives us a glimpse into her life:

DEAF DUMB AND BLIND

Brief but impressive services were held for the late Miss Mary I. Blakely at St. John's Catholic Church on Wednesday afternoon, Rev. Fr. J.M. Zindler of St. Joseph officiating. Casket bearers were Messrs. Wm. Hayden, Roy Wallace, Edward Barry and Frank Hild.

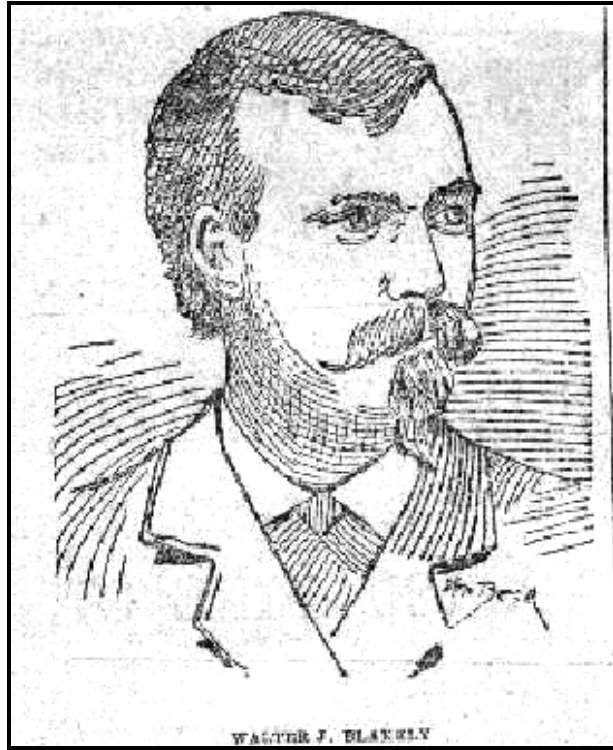
The remains were placed on the Michigan Central 4 o'clock train and accompanied by the sole surviving relative, the sister, Miss Frances M. Blakely, were taken to the old home in St. Louis, Mo. for burial. Requiem high mass services will be held at St. Louis.

Miss Blakely was a remarkably accomplished woman despite the handicap of being deaf, dumb and blind. Her blindness occurred about five years ago, but she was wonderfully active and talented. Her library at the Blakely summer home at Pottawatomie Park is said to be one of the finest in the United States.²¹ Her sister surviving her was a teacher for twenty-five years in the St. Louis schools. They had only lived in this city, but a few years, but the friends they had drawn to them greatly admired them both for many delightful characteristics. Deceased had reached the advanced age of 86.

On January 13, 1920, Mary Imogene Blakely died. The newspaper account of her death, published in St. Louis, Missouri stated that the interment took place at Calvary Cemetery. Regretfully, there is no record at Calvary Cemetery of her burial.

²¹ Author's note: She may have been deaf and blind, but she certainly wasn't dumb

WALTER JAMES BLAKELY



Walter James Blakely, the second child of John and Jemima [Fortune] Blakely, was born on November 18, 1843, at the family home in East Liverpool, Ohio.

The article accompanying the above picture says:

Walter J. Blakely is a splendid specimen of physical manhood -- fully 6 ft. in height, broad shouldered, big muscled, and about two hundred pounds in weight. He is just the man for president of the Missouri Gymnasium, in which office he has made a host of friends. He wears a jet-black mustache and imperial, and they are matched by a pair of laughing black eyes and a suit of black hair. He dresses well, but a trifle carelessly, and is always ready to enjoy a joke or tell a story, except you catch him with the cares of the Excelsior Vinegar & Pickle Company resting on him, and then jokes don't go. He has the good sense to leave his business cares at his office, however.

The above article gives a description of Walter. The following article, that appeared in the newspaper in East Liverpool, Ohio, tells us something more about him.

Walter J. was a young man of 16 or 17 when he left this city and went to St. Louis. Thirty years afterwards he dropped into town - that was three and a half years ago. As he alighted from the train at the station he immediately asked for John N. Taylor, B.C. Simms, H.L. Simms, Jacob Shenkle and other school boy companions, many of whom were dead. He spent an entire week as a guest of his many friends. He has returned several times since on which occasions he has given recitations at the meetings of the Baedeker Club and on one occasion he made a speech and gave several of his famous selections at the Masonic Hall.

Walter J. Blakely is further quoted as having been

A poet of considerable merit and likewise possessed of great dramatic talent; a pioneer East Liverpool potter, dramatic artist and composer.

As the son of John Simpson Blakely, it seems quite natural that he would follow his father into the pottery business. The taste for poetry and dramatics were also characteristics of the Blakely family.

In 1870 Walter lived with his parents, John S. and Jemima [Fortune] Blakely, his sisters, Mary Imogene and Frances Mary, and a maiden aunt, Mary Fortune. Sometime between 1870 and the 1880 census, Walter married Mary J., (maiden name unknown.) She was 7 years his senior and was born in Pennsylvania. (This information gleaned from the 1880 census.) Mary J. Blakely was interred at Calvary Catholic Cemetery on June 20, 1881.

The 1880 census of St. Louis City, St. Louis Co., Missouri shows the family living there. (Note the misspelled surname:)

Walter Blakeley, self, M, M, W, age 36, occ. Commercial clerk.

Mary J. Blakeley, wife, F, M, W, age 43.

Jane C. Blakeley, mother, F, Wid., W, 69, occ. housekeeper.

[Jane is actually Jemima C., not Jane C.]

Frank M. Blakely, brother, M, S, W, 30, Occ. school teacher.

[Error: Frances Mary is female and a sister!]

Mary J. FORTUNE, Aunt, F, S, W, 67. *[This would be Jemimas' sister.]*

Fanny HEATH, cousin, F, S, W, 14, b. MO., Fa. Ky., Mo. Pa. *[daughter of one of Jemimas' sisters.]*

Following the death of his first wife, Mary J., in 1881, Walter J. Blakely married Nannie Hawes of Pittsburgh. Exactly when and where they married is not known.

Only one child was born to Walter and Nannie[Hawes]Blakely, a daughter whom they named Imogene. As will be apparent she was a key person in the preservation of Blakely family history.

In May of 1896 Walter returned to his hometown of East Liverpool, Ohio and spent a week visiting old friends. On his return trip to St. Louis, he wrote the following poem:

"To The Boys"

**No more than five and thirty years
Have passed since you and I
The river swam, the forest trod
As happy hours went by.**

**It seems a space so small that when
I look into the past,
I hear and see each boy and girl
With whom my lot was cast.**

**Their children now, with hands and brain,
The wheels of commerce turn,
Or hold the helm of state, or raise
the monumental urn.**

**In memory of the patriarchs
Whose word those days were law;
But who, e're death, with wondering eyes
Transformed the village saw.**

**There still remains, in majesty
The old Virginia Hills,
Whose lofty tops, with verdure clad,
Despite of human ills.**

**Ambition's call and death's decree,
And need of commerce' space,
Are yet reflected in the stream
Whose waters wash their base.**

**But not alone the river and
The mountains have I found
Unchanged for Ah! the hearts of all
The boys who gather 'round
And press my hand and call my name
Are youthful still, and true.
There is no change among 'the boys'
The town, alone, is new.**

Nannie Hawes Blakely, wife of Walter J., died on May 9, 1903. She was buried at Calvary Cemetery May 19, 1903. Walter survived her 9 years. The three years prior to his death he worked for Laclede Gas Light Company, and was at work when he was "struck with apoplexy".

The poem quoted above was reprinted on the occasion of the death of Walter James Blakely, followed by an account of his life in the East Liverpool, Ohio newspaper, which said in part:

The poem written by Walter J. Blakely on a train while riding between this city and Steubenville in May of 1896, while on a return trip to his home in St. Louis after spending a week with local friends in this city, having been away for some thirty odd years, shows what a love for his old home town he had, and of the feeling that went through his veins when he was permitted the pleasure of talking and being with his old "school boy and girlfriends" once again.

Walter J. was a poet of considerable merit and likewise possessed great dramatic talent. He, his father, [John S.], and sister, [Frances Mary], Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Woodward and Mr. Thomas Thackery were members of the Old Home Players Dramatic Club. This club built the old town hall, afterwards called the Bradshaw Hall, which until recently was used as an edifice by the Christian Church for worship.

It was his greatest pleasure to call on Mrs. Patrick McNicol and others of the oldest members of St. Aloysius Church whom he could find that were living; and those who were dead, he would hunt up their children and grandchildren. The latchstring was out to Mr. Blakely in hundreds of local homes in the city, both of Protestant and Catholic. He was made an honorary member of the United States Potters Association because of his connection with pioneer pottery in East Liverpool.

The news of his death came to the city in a telegram to Mr. H. L. Simms, at whose home he always made his headquarters when visiting the city.

The notice that appeared in the St. Louis paper gave this account:

Walter J. Blakely Funeral

The funeral of Walter J. Blakely, who died suddenly Monday, at his home, 4467 Berlin Avenue, took place yesterday at 8 o'clock a.m.

yesterday morning from New Cathedral Chapel. Burial was in Calvary Cemetery.

Mr. Blakely moved to St. Louis in 1863, from Ohio, where he was born November 18, 1843. He took an active part in literary and dramatic circles in St. Louis and was regarded as a Shakespearean student. He was, for a number of years, president of the St. Louis Gymnasium and the Audubon Society. He was also one of the organizers of the McCullagh Dramatic Club and a member of the Papyrus Club. He was educated at St. Vincent's Benedictine College in Pennsylvania. He was president of the St. Louis Sanitary Company until it was absorbed by the city. He was an alumnus of St. Louis University. He is survived by two sisters and a daughter, Miss Imogene Blakely.

Walter James Blakely died on Monday, October 7, 1912. Following a Requiem Mass at the Cathedral Chapel in St. Louis, Walter J. Blakely was buried next to his wife, Nannie on October 10, 1912. He was 68 years old.

Imogene Blakely



The only child of Walter James and his second wife, Nannie [Hawes] Blakely, was Imogene, who chose a life of service to God, as many of her cousins had. After she entered the convent, she was given the name Sister Mary De Chantal. In 1926 she was at St. Mary's Infirmary on Papin Street in St. Louis.

Retained in the family archives are two letters from Sister De Chantal, [nee Imogene Blakely], the first written to Stephens L. Blakely, on June 16, 1926 and a second, also written to Steve Blakely, dated November 21, 1939. It was this first letter, filed away for several years that cleared up part of the mystery that surrounded the matriarch of the Blakely family, Sarah and gave us her maiden name.

Dear Stephens,

Your letter of June 4th was received. I am so sorry the pictures of St. Mary's Infirmary affected you thusly, and I certainly hope the billious feeling caused by the billious building have not lasted all this time. The enclosed card will, I'm sure, act as an antidote; let's hope it has the desired effect. If you would pay a visit to St. Louis and see the interior, you would not find it nearly as billious as the exterior. Try it sometime and see how it feels.

Well, I wrote to Aunt Frank and received a long letter of explanation; I knew just about as much when I finished reading it as I did when I began. The substance, however, was this: the pictures were those of her father's Aunt and Uncle, Susan and John Haughton. That makes

them yours and my great, great Aunt and Uncle.²² The other picture of Johnston Blakely, commander of the good ship 'Wasp'. It was simply a newspaper cut, and the relationship of this Johnston Blakely is not firmly established, although he is supposed to be a cousin of our grandfather's.²³ It seems Father Aloysius knew all about him. The other pictures were those of my grandmother and grandfather Blakely²⁴, taken when they were 19 and 23 years. Aunt Frank says that you had copies of the four, but not Johnston Blakely, as it is only a wood cut.

I don't know if this data is what you want, but it is all she gave (Aunt Frank). Perhaps you had better write to her directly, anyway, as she takes a pride in keeping all the family archives, etc.

I am sorry to have kept you waiting for this, but I have been very busy with various Convent episodes and just now am taking a course in Physiology at the Medical School. You see, Paul is not the only smart one in the family! I am trying for an M. S. (Master of Science). I hear from Elizabeth occasionally and vice versa, but she is the only one.

Was very glad to hear from you. Aunt Sue etc. were interested to hear of you. They are all well; Web is married and has three splendid boys; Sukey and Herman are still together, Herman is practicing law. Nancy is still in the Convent.²⁵

Give my love to Jane and the children, and try the effect of another letter. Keep this letterhead so you will know where to write or where to come if you happen to hit St. L. Aunt Frank's address is 4485 Pershing Avenue. It is our old Berlin Avenue and she is just next to our old 4479.

Well, good-bye for the present. Affectionately, Sister M. De Chantal (Imo)

The second letter, written on November 21, 1939, reads:

Dear Stephens;

Your letter reached me while I was in Retreat, so I have not been able to do much to Aunt Frank's things until the last few days. I am glad you liked the pictures. It is a slow job getting Aunt Frank's things

²² The great, great aunt and uncle referred to in this letter were John and Susan Haughton, brother and sister-in-law of the matriarch, Sarah Blakely.

²³ "Our grandfather's" would be John Simpson and James Blakely.

²⁴ John S. and Jemima Blakely. These were lovely pencil drawings that were donated in 2003 to the Ohio Historical Society.

²⁵ None of these names are family members.

straightened out, as I can not work long at a time and I never saw such an accumulation of stuff; things I remember in the house years ago and I thought had been destroyed or disposed of long ago.

I have not been able to go through her books carefully yet, but I did empty one trunk with all sorts of odds and ends. You see, when I persuaded her to go out to St. Mary's two years ago, I packed up her things as best I could while she was still in the humor and thought I could go through them more in detail later, but I just never got to it. I did, however, find some memorandum books in this trunk in which are written a number of dates of both births and deaths. I am enclosing them in this, copied from the book. The page from the Latin prayer book is, to me, very interesting. I did not know she had all these things. It was so hard to get her to tell me anything.

Then, I am sending separately some photographs which I thought you might want; if you do not want to be burdened with them, just burn them, as I can not keep so much stuff. When I die, there will be very few 'treasures' to be found belonging to me.

One thing that I do regret is that Aunt Frank disposed of the old mahogany sideboard on which so many of her family were baptized and on which Mass was celebrated in my grandfather's house in East Liverpool, Ohio. Another thing she sold was the handsome piecrust²⁶ table. They say there are only three of these tables in the U. S. Aunt Frank was so angry with me for entering the Convent that she sold the table to someone in Chicago because her name was Fortune, but no relation. I don't think anything can be done about it now, but I would have tried to keep her from it, had I known.

I hope you are well. I never hear from any of the family except Paul, and that very seldom. I am very busy all the time and I suppose they are also. I shall not forget you when I get to Aunt Frank's books; goodness knows what I should find. Give my love to Peggy. I hope you enjoy the photos, etc. and as I said before, do not burden yourself unless you want them.

Goodbye and "Christmas Greetings" in advance. Lots of Love,
Imogene

Sister Mary De Chantal, S. S. M.

Thanksgiving Day:

I did not have a chance to send this, but I did look over the books and

²⁶ See the picture of Jemima Fortune Blakely as an elderly woman and you will note both the piecrust table as well as the pencil drawing of John Simpson Blakely in the background

there is really nothing worth sending. They are in worse condition than I thought. I did find a few memorial cards which may help with the dates. I decided to send this in with the pictures. Be sure to destroy whatever you do not want. Do not feel obliged to keep them.

Nov. 28th:

This seems to be an ill-fated letter. I do not seem to be able to get it off! Think I'll do it this time and a box with the pictures will follow by parcel post. Imo."

Sister Mary de Chantal, [Imogene Blakely], daughter of Walter and Nannie [Hawes] Blakely, died in September 1948. She was buried on October 2, 1948 at Calvary Cemetery, St. Louis, Missouri.

Ada Elizabeth Blakely

The third child of John S. and Jemima was Ada Elizabeth Blakely, born August 29, 1847, in East Liverpool. She brought added joy to this growing family even though her life spanned a mere 18 years.

The newspaper announcement of her death reads:

At St. Louis, of consumption on Wednesday the 13th, [1866] Ada E., daughter of John S. and Jemima Blakely, in her 19th year. Funeral services will be held at 2 o'clock, Friday at the Church of the Annunciation.²⁷

Ada is buried at Calvary Cemetery, St. Louis.

²⁷ Author's Note: This brief obituary doesn't speak much to her young life, but I'm confident that she was poised, well educated and possessed a great love of literature and the arts, as did her parents, sister and brother.

FRANCES MARY BLAKELY

“AUNT FRANK”



Frances Mary Blakely c. 1855

The birth of Frances Mary Blakely on November 20, 1849 completed the family of John Simpson and Jemima Cecelia [Fortune] Blakely.

Frances was born in East Liverpool, Ohio, where she spent the first 12 years of her life. When she was about 13 years old, she and her family left East Liverpool, Ohio and moved to St. Louis, Missouri.

According to the 1870 census of St. Louis, St. Louis County, Missouri Frances lived with her parents and listed her occupation as teacher. After her father, John S. Blakely died in February 1877, Frances Mary along with her sister, Imogene and mother, Jemima moved in with her brother and sister-in-law, Walter J. and Mary Blakely.

The 1880 census of St. Louis City, St. Louis County, Missouri is erroneous when it listed Frances Mary as “Frank M.,” cited her as “male” and “brother.” Walter Blakely did not have any brothers, only sisters. It is a fact that Frances Mary was called “Frank,” and was referred to as “Aunt Frank” by her niece, Imogene (Sister DeChantal) in her letters to Stephens L. Blakely. Frances Mary was also listed as “Frank M.” in the 1890 City Directory for St. Louis.

Apparently, Frances Mary and her mother, Jemima Blakely moved out of Walter's house and into an apartment or boarding house, as their address was 3635½ North Market Street in the 1890 City Directory. Walter J. Blakely's address was 3101 Sheridan. [1890 Directory]

Frances taught school for forty-five years in the schools of St. Louis, Missouri. Sometime after the deaths of her mother and brother Frances retired from her teaching responsibilities and took up the care of her sister, Mary Imogene, who was deaf and slowly losing her sight.

About 1914, Frances and Imogene left St. Louis and moved to the Benton Harbor area of Michigan. They spent their summers at Pottawatomie Park and their winters at their home on Broadway, in Benton Harbor. Mary Imogene Blakely died in January 1920 and Frances accompanied her remains back to St. Louis for burial. Frances stayed in St. Louis and took up residence at a boarding house on North Taylor Avenue. Toward the end of her life, she consented to the wishes of her niece, Imogene (Sister DeChantal) and Frances moved to St. Mary's Infirmary, her final residence.

Frances Blakely never married. She devoted her lifetime to teaching and, also, became the family historian. Without her care much of the Blakely family history would have been lost.²⁸

Frances Mary Blakely died on May 24, 1939, at the age of 89. Following her funeral Mass, she was buried at Calvary Cemetery in St. Louis, next to her parents.

²⁸ Author's note: Unfortunately not all of Aunt Frank's memorabilia survived, but there is enough to enhance the family story. I am proud to be her successor in writing this family history.
Laura W. Stencek 2003

A VISIT TO ST MARYS PENNSYLVANIA

On Thursday afternoon, July 17, 2003 my husband, Ron, and I arrived in St. Marys, Elk County, Pennsylvania. The purpose of our trip was to learn as much as we could about this small town in the short time we had allowed ourselves; just two days.

Shortly after checking into our motel, we headed north on South St. Marys Street to try and locate some of the streets I had read so much about in the Wimmer diaries. As luck would have it, since we didn't have a map in hand, we came across Maurus Street, which I had translated as Manrus Street in the diaries! We found Center Street, where my great, great grandfather and grandmother had lived in the 1880's. We drove down St. Michael Street where Sebastian and Lavinia [Blakely] Wimmer lived.

Spotting the Towne House Inn, which I had read about on the internet as having been the home of Dr. Eban J. Russ, we stopped there for dinner. I must be easily excitable, as I was absolutely absorbed by the remaining beauty and grandeur of this magnificent home! While my husband sat at the table on what was the original front porch, though now is closed in and serves as part of the dining room, I wandered from room to fabulous room, taking videos and stills, oooooing and ahhhing the whole time. It is truly regretful that the original hand-painted walls had been covered over, leaving only the two on either side of the front door. Looking at these small remnants of the past, it was easy to imagine what the true splendor the Russ home must have been. I was given permission to go upstairs and I did. I went up the back stairs, all the way to what used to be the ballroom, but now has been divided into motel rooms. How wonderful it must have been! I went up and down the main staircase several times, looking at the beautifully carved wood and the leaded stained-glass window on the landing. Finally settling down, we enjoyed a delicious steak dinner, thanked our hostess for making copies of the history of the home, which was included with the menu and I had threatened to take with me, and we set out again to see what we could find before the end of the day.

It was while driving down Maurus Street that we saw St. Joseph's Convent, where the Wimmer grandchildren, Nita and Jack had gone to school and Sister Beatrice Blakely, daughter of James and Susanna Blakely entered the convent, and where she is buried today.

Turning right onto Church Street, we came to St. Mary's Church and pulled into the parking lot. Grabbing my video camera, I leaped from the car and tried the side door. It was open, in spite of the late hour - nearly 8 p.m. I entered a small vestibule and looking to my left, I could just see the baptismal font and the steps leading up to the main altar. I was so overcome with the beauty of the magnificent

high altar; I could but stand there in awe...and weep. The hand-painted fresco above the high altar looked as if it had been painted yesterday; so glorious were the hues of blue and white. The high altar and side altars were white with highlights of gold. I tried to imagine if this was how it looked when James and Susanna came here to worship each Sunday. I pictured the magnificently carved spires and niches of the high altar, reaching up to the frescoed ceiling above, in a natural wood, highly lacquered and polished; and the side altars the same dark wood.

I stood in the middle of the large center aisle, staring at the beautiful altars. I looked around at the beautifully hand painted (in Germany) Stations of the Cross, and the large stained-glass windows with inscriptions in German that adorned both sides of the church. No, these windows were not there during the lifetime of my ancestors, as they had been installed, I think I read, in 1904 that would have been 19 years after they died. I looked up and tried to capture on film the fresco that adorns the center of the church ceiling, tears still streaming down my cheeks.

Ron joined me, knowing I would be overwhelmed and fearing that I might be hyperventilating from the experience! We knelt in silent prayer, I praying for the rest and repose of the souls of my long-forgotten ancestors and kin. The aroma that filled my nostrils reminded me of my grandfather's attic, bringing to mind the antiquity of this building.

We hadn't been inside very long when a man joined us, I fail to recall his name, who was a member of the Parish Building Maintenance Committee. We told him who we were and why we had come so far. He was most gracious and accommodating, immediately turning on all the lights so we could see the church in its true splendor. He told us of the recent repairs to the walls of the church, and how the frescos were the originals, carefully cleaned. He took us back to the sacristy and showed us the original wooden altar, which I knew had been built by Brother Cosmas in 1869 and placed in the sanctuary in July of that year. I was almost afraid to touch this beautiful wooden creation, which is now used as a storage cabinet for vestments and linens, but I did; gently. The feeling of actually being in touch with the past, with the people of St. Marys Church of the mid-1800's was electric!

We followed him down stairs from there, and he took us into the very foundation of this glorious church, built so many years ago by the dedicated German people of St. Marys. The hand-hewn wooden beams resting on the chiseled and carved stone that make up the foundation; waist-high tunnels running the length of the building exposing the rock-solid foundation.

We thanked our host profusely and drove back to our motel room, exuberant that we had already discovered so much! We were supposed to meet Mary Miller from the Historical Society on Friday, but she was called away at the last minute. She gave us directions to the cemetery, Sacred Heart Church and the Wimmer house.

After eating a delicious breakfast at the Corner Diner on Chestnut Street, we

headed west - to Ridgway, another town I had read so much about in the Wimmer diaries. We stopped in the Court House, hoping to find a deed for the Blakely cemetery plot in St. Marys, but their records did not go back that far. We wandered around the courthouse, looking at the pictures hanging in the main hallway and visualizing how it must have been when Ernest Wimmer was the District Attorney, plying his trade in these very halls and rooms.

We headed back to St. Marys, going straight to St. Marys Cemetery. I had hoped to meet with the custodian, Blake Haberberger, but a sign on the office door told me they closed at noon on Friday; I had missed him by 45 minutes! We parked the car near the chapel Mary had told me about and set out on foot to find what was the Blakely lot, before it was given to the Luhr family, and to find the Wimmer lot, where my great, great aunts are buried. We found the Wimmer lot immediately, with the obelisk monument and the three marked graves; Sue X. Blakely, Lavinia [Blakely] Wimmer and Ernest Wimmer, son of Sebastian and Lavinia. Sue Xavier and Lavinia were sisters. I was sorry to see that Wilfried Wimmer's grave was not marked, though I know he is buried there from the accounts of his death printed in the local newspaper in March, 1913. Sebastian Wimmer is probably buried on his lot as well. He died at St. Vincent's Abbey on November 29, 1921 and I suspect he, too, was returned to St. Marys for burial. Someday I'd like to place their headstones on this lot.

While I was studying and taking pictures of the Wimmer lot, Ron was half way up the hill, across the road, signaling that he had located the Luhr lot. I joined him there and took more pictures, believing I had found my Blakely lot, only to discover later that I had not. The Blakely lot was actually at the top of the hill. We found that lot, too, but believing the graves to be too new, I went back to the other lot - where Charles and Elizabeth Luhr and their daughter, Josephine J. are buried and took pictures. I did not take any pictures of the Blakely-Luhr lot. My biggest regret is that I did not bring my family records with me. Had I done so, I would have known then - not later - that I was photographing the wrong lot.

We left the cemetery and went to Sacred Heart Church. It is another beautiful church; the one where Sue X. had so lovingly cared for the altar in the last years of her life. But the high altar was gone; replaced with a modern altar facing the people. The floor of the sanctuary covered in a lustrous marble. All that remained of the original church interior was the dark, beautifully carved wood that covered the wall behind the altar. I suspect that the Stations of the Cross might have been original as well, but I don't know this for sure. I wanted to take pictures here as well, but Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was being held. I silently took some videos, vowing to return on Saturday to take some stills. We knelt in prayer for a while, then left.

We drove around, passing and photographing the Priory and St. Joseph's Convent, and then set out to find and photograph the Wimmer house. After driving around the block three or four times, and not being able to find it, we parked the car at the

back entrance of Sacred Heart Church and walked down Maurus Street. Mary Miller had sent me a news clipping of the Wimmer house, when it was moved from facing St. Michael Street to the back of the Wimmer lot, and now facing Maurus Street. Just before we reached the funeral home, set back from the street, we found the Wimmer house, now divided into three apartments. We met a gentleman as he was leaving his downstairs, right side apartment and had a most interesting conversation. He verified that this was indeed the Wimmer house, but knew little more about it. I believe he mentioned that he was somehow related to George Wiedenborner, though now I don't recall how. I told him about the Wimmer diaries, now housed at the St. Marys Historical Society on Depot Street, and how I had transcribed some of these diaries and remembered the name George Wiedenborner is mentioned throughout many of them.

We returned to our car and went back to St. Marys Church for another look around and to take some more pictures. After a short time we then returned to our motel to digest the happenings of the day. That evening we went to Bavarian Inn for dinner; pricy but good.

On Saturday we had arranged to finally meet Mary Miller at the Historical Society on Depot Street. After breakfast, again at the Corner Diner, we went back to Sacred Heart Church, hoping to take some pictures inside but this time there was a wedding; never did get any pictures inside. We drove to the Historical Society, Mary waiting for us just inside the back door. What a delightful two hours! I am so grateful to Mary for all she has done for me - helping me research my Blakely family as best she could, and for allowing me to transcribe so many of the Wimmer diaries! She and the Society took the risk of sending these irreplaceable manuals of the past via United Parcel Service to my home in Florida, and I will be forever grateful, as it was from these diaries that I learned so much about my Blakely family.

Saying goodbye to Mary, we paid a final visit to the graveyard, vowing to someday mark the graves of James and Susanna Blakely and their daughter-in-law, Josephine [Luhr] Blakely. We attended the evening Mass at St. Marys Church, sitting in a front pew in full view of the beautiful altar. I hope I didn't distract the priest that evening, but I couldn't control the tears of joy and awe that streamed down my cheeks during most of the Mass. It was all so overwhelming and now my visit was coming to an end. I silently said my good-byes, got into the car and drove away. Dinner that evening was at Wendy's across the street from our motel then early to bed.

We left St. Marys early Sunday morning; a mist appeared to be rising from the forested hills. It is a most beautiful area...and I can well understand why James Blakely decided to leave Pittsburgh in 1862 and make St. Marys, Elk County, Pennsylvania his home for the following 20 years.

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